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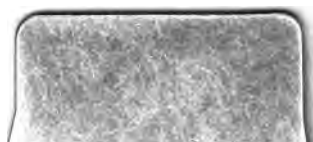
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# PHILOCALIA:

ELEMENTARY ESSAYS

ON

NATURAL, POETIC, AND PICTURESQUE

BEAUTY.

BY

WILLIAM PURTON, M.A.



"Neque enim cujusque artis quæ sit formula nunc quærimus, neque nos discipulorum locum, nedum magistrorum, implere volumus; sed indoctorum otiose spectantium. Qui si quando artis ipsius quam ignorant, præcepta edunt, ineptissimæ arrogantiae merito insimulantur: sinca tantum conantur explicare, quæ in communi hominum sensu, atque in affectibus omnium sunt posita, venia donantur etiam errantes."

KEBLE PRÆLECT. ACAD. III.

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## ESSAY I.

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### ERRATA.

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- Page 27, line 2 from bottom, *for* unborn, *read* inborn  
Page 59, line 5 from bottom, *for* page 15, *read* page 14.  
Page 61, line 9, *for* declares, *read* deduces  
Page 77, line 13 from bottom, *for* (Sect. iii.) *read* (Lect. iii.)  
Page 85, line 12, *for* male, *read* female, and *for* female, male.  
Page 105, line 14, *for* appertaining, *read* as pertaining  
Page 105, line 7 from bottom, *for* Aristotle, granting, *read* Aristotle. Granting.

### WORDSWORTH,

"Heaven holdeth out the key;  
Love turns it, and unlocks to virtuous minds  
The sanctuary of the Beautiful."

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Translated by J. E. Taylor.



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ESSAY I.

ON NATURAL BEAUTY.

WITH AN

APPENDIX

ON CRIME AND MORALS.

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“ Beauty . . . . . a serene accord  
Of forms and colours, passive, yet endowed  
In their submissiveness with power as sweet  
And gracious, almost might I dare to say,  
As virtue is, or goodness, sweet as love,  
Or the remembrance of a generous deed,  
Or mildest visitation of pure thought,  
When God the giver of all joy is thanked  
Religiously, in silent blessedness.”

WORDSWORTH.

“ Heaven holdeth out the key ;  
Love turns it, and unlocks to virtuous minds  
The sanctuary of the Beautiful.”

MICHAEL ANGELO.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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LECTURING on Poetry, from the Professorial Chair at Oxford, Mr. Keble thought it necessary to apologise, in the words quoted on the title-page, for such remarks as he foresaw he should have to make on painting, sculpture, and other arts with which he was not professionally acquainted. Such caution as he imposes upon himself is doubly necessary on my part. I think, however, I shall not be tempted to trespass far beyond the limits of such elementary questions as are the subject of popular discussion, into the realms of art or natural science. My object is, simply to consider what Beauty is in nature and art or poetry. The attempt may seem to argue no little presumption, so emphatically, and on such high authority, has it been denounced as visionary and futile. Dugald Stewart, in his *Essay on the Beautiful*, says, "It has long been a favourite problem with philosophers, the common quality or qualities which entitle a thing to the denomination of the beautiful; but the success of these specu-

lations has been so inconsiderable, that little can be inferred from them but the impossibility of the problem to which they have been directed." David Hume turned all reasoning on the subject into ridicule, holding *de gustibus nil disputandum* to be an incontrovertible axiom, and that there was no standard of beauty save in the mind of the beholder. Later, even in our own days, those have not been wanting who have shunned the analytical study of beauty, as subversive of all feeling and enthusiasm in the study of art or admiration of nature. I was myself present when the late President of the Royal Academy, Sir Martin Archer Shee, made the following remarks in his address at the distribution of prizes to the students, in Dec., 1835 :— " Whatever philosophy may determine to be the essential or constituent principle of beauty—whether it be found in utility or fitness, in proportion or adaptation, the artist is but little enlightened by the enquiry. He must endeavour to obtain more accurate knowledge than metaphysics can supply. Where others argue and analyse, *he* must feel and exemplify. To him beauty is not a subject for reasoning, to be disposed of by a scholastic process, but an object of sense, touching the heart to rapture, and rousing the fires of genius to illuminate a world. The intellectual anatomist may dissect the form of beauty to a skeleton ; but it is the blooming life-breathing aspect of the goddess that the artist is called upon to contemplate and adore." Sir James Stephen, in the Epilogue to his *Ecclesiastical Biography*, is equally severe from a religious point of

view. "Love," he says, "is indulgent, ingenious, and profuse in the multiplication of its bounties, and especially of those bounties which have blameless delight for their only assignable object. Hence all the indefinitely varied tastes, desires, and appetites of man, and the endless sources provided for the gratification of them. Philosophy has laboured to explain what is the sublime, and what is the beautiful: theology, declining these problems, finds that the sublime and the beautiful reside in that correspondence between the mind and the objects of its perception, which the love of the Creator has established in order to elevate the thoughts and gladden the hearts of His family on earth."

Since these words were written, I think the public mind in this country, as far as educated in such studies, has undergone a change, chiefly brought about by writers of the æsthetic school of Germany—a school founded on that of Plato, whose conceptions of the beautiful were second only to those which are revealed to us in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Indeed, I believe that the general disinclination to enquire into "the essential and constituent principles of beauty," indicated by the above quotations, is not to be attributed so much to the enquiry itself as to the spirit in which it has been conducted by our most popular writers on the subject. The revival of art in England, in the latter part of the last century, called forth a number of able critics and commentators on every subject connected with it, the most distinguishing characteristic of whose writings was the inculcation of

the practical and the real, as opposed to the ideal and visionary; and, depreciating genius, to impress upon the student the necessity of relying more upon education and science than upon feeling: upon the head rather than the heart. This was doubtless taking safe ground, the safest perhaps for art: if, indeed, real art is much affected by writings of the kind. I cannot, however, but think that it had a prejudicial effect upon the public taste, giving a hard rule-and-line tone to criticism, and altogether taking low ground.

The first name that we meet with of any note is that of Hogarth; but his theory, taking an accidental for an essential, or rather the essential element of beauty, could never by itself have exercised much influence. Horace Walpole and writers of his stamp conduced largely to the stock of frivolous eclectic pedantry; but the founders of the school were two of the greatest men of an age prolific of great men, though stigmatised by Carlyle as "the most prosaic Britain had yet seen" (*Essay on Burns*)—Sir Joshua Reynolds and Burke. Of Sir Joshua, I would be the last to question a word he has said on art. I believe that with his pen, as with his pencil, he has done more for English art than any other man ever did, or perhaps ever will do; but the light in which he regarded both art and nature takes its colour from the times in which he lived: times of connoisseurship and dilettantism, which, displaying a vast amount of learning and diligent enquiry into the principles of art, and laying its foundation, where only it can be laid, in the study of nature, sought not

to read in nature another language than that which addresses itself to the outward sense, nor in art a higher object than the gratification of educated taste or matured judgment.

This period has been described with acute discrimination by Wordsworth. He says that he himself passed through it not unscathed, though Nature ultimately resumed her sway.

“ Even the visible universe  
Fell under the dominion of a taste  
Less spiritual ; with microscopic eye  
Was scanned as I had scanned the moral world.

\* \* \* \* \*

Through presumption, even in pleasure pleased  
Unworthily, disliking here, and there  
Liking ; by rules of mimic art transferred  
To things above all art ; but more—for this,  
Although a strong infection of the age,  
Was never much my habit—giving way  
To a comparison of scene with scene,  
Bent over much on superficial things,  
Pampering myself with meagre novelties  
Of colour and proportion, to the moods  
Of time and season : to the moral power,  
The affections and the spirit of the place  
Insensible.”

It was, perhaps, well for art that Reynolds devoted his energies to understand its language as taught by its great masters, rather than the philosophy and spirit of nature. Of this spirit he drank deeply ; but he affected to despise that which was most congenial with his own ; ever aspiring, and urging all others to aspire alike to



fields of thought and imagery in which few find themselves at home. Reversing the position of M. Jourdain, he was ever through life giving to the world beautiful poetry which he considered prose, limiting the term poetic to classic or heroic art, whilst throwing off from his easel poetic beauty of less pretension, which at once finds its way to the heart. This illustrates an axiom of Goethe's, who says with reference to art, "No one knows what he is doing when he acts rightly; but of what is wrong we are always conscious."

Whilst Sir Joshua, in the prosecution of his object, was scarifying pictures layer after layer, to discover the mysteries of colour, or blotting sheets of paper in proportion to the light and dark of others, to arrive at the principles of chiaroscuro, Burke, by a very similar process, was endeavouring to ascertain what amount of light and shadow in nature irritated or soothed the optic nerve in such a manner as to cause pleasure or pain, and to build thereon his theory of beauty. This is, I believe, "the philosophy of the sublime and the beautiful:" this "the intellectual anatomy" glanced at by the writers above quoted.

Burke's theory was attacked, and it may occasion surprise that it was not strangled, in its cradle. He was, indeed, a mere boy when he wrote it; but what estimate he placed upon it in after life, I cannot say. The most acute and most accomplished writer on subjects connected with art of this period was Payne Knight, who says, "Except my friend before mentioned (Mr. Price), I have never met with any man of

learning, by whom the philosophy of the inquiry into the sublime and the beautiful was not as much despised and ridiculed as the brilliancy and animation of the style were applauded and admired." In another passage in his *Essay on Taste* he asserts that the work, in direct opposition to the writer's known sentiments, has a tendency to materialism : which opinion is corroborated by Dugald Stewart.

Payne Knight attempts to prove, in opposition to Hume's assumption of the non-existence of intrinsic beauty, that there is " a real and permanent principle of beauty,"—" certain or definable combinations of forms, lines, or colours, that are in themselves gratifying to the mind, or pleasing to the organs of sensation ;" but it is not very easy to determine what conclusion he arrives at, further than that this principle is to be sought in the study of nature, and the works of the best artists in painting and sculpture. It was chiefly to such studies and to landscape-gardening that he applied his principles. " In judging of the works of nature," he says, " it must be owned that there appears to have been less inconstancy ; the beauty of particular kinds of trees, plants, flowers, and animals, having, I believe, been universally recognised in all ages and in all countries." This argument, the strongest evidence of any truth, that it has been recognised by all, in all times, and in all places, he concedes almost reluctantly, though conclusive as against Hume. I need not say that he does not attempt to account for it ; and although the subject has been approached with deeper

reverence, much progress has not been made towards any solution since. Beauty has indeed been analysed and sublimated with much skill and subtlety, but without leaving much perceptible residuum of practical information to the unlearned ; nor do the elements evolved belong to beauty exclusively : there is much that is descriptive and suggestive, but nothing definite.

It was my original intention to have published this essay in conjunction with two others, with which I have made considerable progress : one on Poetic, the other on Picturesque Beauty. I have found, however, that beginning to write, like " the beginning of strife, is as when one letteth out water : " we know not what will come ; so that with the subject of Natural Beauty before me, I have been drawn into the discussion of so much that seemed connected with it, that, in the hope of making myself understood, I have subjoined an Appendix longer than the Essay to which it is appended. It struck me, moreover, that the subject was complete in itself, and would be interesting to many who would feel indifference towards the other two. Many of the serious questions touched upon, are also engrossing especial attention at the present time ; so that I have decided that this Essay and the Appendix should not wait for the others, which, should health and life, now waning, be spared to me, I shall hope to finish hereafter.

Most writers on this subject have, I think, stumbled against the same stone at the threshold, endeavouring to bring all beauty, of nature and the fine arts, archi-

itecture, the decorative and mechanical arts. to one and the same standard. My object in the first essay will be to shew, that Natural Beauty is a thing of itself; that its constituent principles or laws are to be found distributed through all the works and ordinances of God, the one pervading element being LOVE. The beauty of art and science must be determined by an entirely different standard, the standard of TRUTH.



## ESSAY I.

### ON NATURAL BEAUTY.

---

THE broad thesis of the present Essay is, that natural beauty is the exhibition of the love and mercy of God in the visible creation. It is not important to decide whether the term beauty is, in its primary sense, confined to objects of sight—a point on which writers are pretty equally divided. All our first ideas are, except in those deprived of this blessing, derived from sight; it is not therefore surprising, as Mr. Payne Knight contends, that “common use in all languages of Europe, both ancient and modern, has always applied a like term, indifferently, to moral and intellectual, as well as physical and material qualities.” I cannot, however, but think that public opinion more generally coincides with that of Mr. Dugald Stewart, who says, that, “notwithstanding the great variety of qualities, physical, intellectual, and moral, to which the word beauty is applicable, I believe it will be admitted, that in its primitive and more general acceptation it refers to objects of sight” (*Essay on the Beautiful*). However this may be, our immediate subject is visible beauty,

that which pleases the sight. It will, however, be found that all beauty in creation, material, moral, and spiritual, is intimately connected, springing from one fountain, and possessing essentially the same attributes and characteristics.

To satisfy ourselves that beauty is evolved in all the works—is, indeed, the object of creation, we need only turn to the revealed history of creation, which coincides with all our experience, and all that we can conceive on the subject. The only genuine English word which we have to express beauty is goodness, or goodliness, now nearly obsolete, though *good-looking* is still in common use. In the narrative of the creation we are told of every part of His work that God saw that it was good; and when all was finished, “God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good;” in the Septuagint, *καλα λιν* “and behold it was very beautiful.” It is true that the Hebrew word here used is, like our word good, indifferently applied to objects of visible or intrinsic excellence; but in many passages it evidently relates to the former; as a little further on, where it is said, “The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were *fair*,” and the words “*saw*” and “*behold*” evidently imply such meaning here. The Scripture word, however, which most emphatically expresses beauty, has been rendered in our translation by the inadequate borrowed term *glory*. I cannot tell what connexion there may be between the two words, nor is it material, as they seem to be convertible. Thus in Exodus xxxiii. 19, where it is said, “I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee. The Septuagint has it, “I will pass by thee in my

*glory.*" And again, Isaiah xl. 6, "All flesh is grass, and the *goodliness* thereof as the flower of grass," St. Peter quotes as "all the *glory* of man."

In no passage in the Old or New Testament can I dissociate this word *glory* from images of splendour and beauty. St. Paul says, "A man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man." "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." "The heavens," sings the Psalmist, "declare the glory of God," and, in the most sublime of uninspired anthems, "Heaven and Earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory." Coleridge, in the *Table Talk*, is made to say, that "the sublime, in our sense of the word" (by which, I suppose, he means Burke's sense as distinct from the beautiful), "is Hebrew by birth;" but who in the word *glory* can realise this distinction? The sublimity of beauty is Hebrew also.

We may, then, assume that the work of creation is to produce the good—material, moral, and spiritual beauty. At present we have only to do with the first; and the elements of visible, as of all other beauty, I trace in the order of creation as recorded in Genesis. Light produced out of darkness, life out of dead matter, harmony out of chaos. We have here, I think, no uncertain data on which to build a theory of beauty. Light, with all the prismatic hues of colour—Life and Health—and Harmony. It may seem strange that I do not make *form* another element of beauty, as pro-



ducing forms out of that which "was without form" was a step in creation; but form may be an element of ugliness: a verdict which has been passed by the concurrent testimony of all ages, even on some of the forms of nature. It will be more safe therefore, to ascribe beauty to those forms which possess the other attributes in greatest perfection.

We are here met by an objection which must occur to everyone. If God pronounced all that He had made beautiful, how shall man say that any part is not so? Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici*, comes directly to this point. He says, "I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind, or species, or creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logick we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in the outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms; and having passed the general visitation of God, who saw that all that He had made was good, that is, conformable to His will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule and order of beauty." The only answer to be given is, That the excellence of beauty, as of everything else, is comparative. The toad is more beautiful than a mass of blubber; and if by any *logic* it can be proved that a toad is as beautiful as a humming-bird, or a fungus as a rose, I will give up all distinction between beauty and the reverse in nature; but not till then.

The next step in our inquiry is, How are we taught to distinguish beauty from deformity—good from evil? We can be at no loss where to look for an answer. We know that man

has obtained the knowledge of good and evil by the process described in that remarkable passage in his first history called (though it is not a Scriptural expression) "the fall of man." If we take this according to the letter, as a narrative of a fact, it does not advance us much in our inquiry. We learn only that man has brought sin and death into the world by one act of disobedience, and that he was tempted to this by the subtlety of the serpent, which is now generally understood to be Satan or the devil. Few, however, I think, do take it literally in all particulars. I have often heard it said, by those who contend that it is a narrative, "Oh, it is not necessary to believe that the sin of our first parents was eating an apple." If, then, we may discard the letter so far, where can be the objection to do so altogether—to take it as a parable or allegory? if by tracing the symbolic meaning, such appearing evident and conclusive, we recognise at once a lively representation of a great change in his state, through which he has passed to the endurance of sin and suffering, but through which he has reached to all the varied knowledge and intelligence which we trace in his history.

Many have contended that the narrative must be taken parabolically. Dr. Conyers Middleton,\* one of the greatest scholars of his time, writing more than a century ago, says, "From my own reflections, I have ever been inclined to consider the story of the fall of man as a moral fable or allegory, in which certain doctrines are represented by a fiction of persons and facts, which have no real existence; for to understand it literally shocks at once the principle of probability."

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Whether he or any one else so understanding it, has ever given an exposition of what is represented, I cannot say; but I have never met with any such exposition. The meaning appears to me so obvious, that I think no one who did could miss it. Before, however, giving my own explanation, to bespeak the reader's patience, I must beg that he will attentively consider, with me, the usual popular interpretation, and say whether, to make it consistent, it is not necessary to do great violence to the text; whether much is not overlooked altogether, a forced meaning given to many expressions, and whether after all it does not remain not only unsatisfactory but contradictory. There is not much difference between what are usually considered orthodox commentaries: I will take that of Matthew Henry, the nearest at hand, observing generally that he and all who take this passage as a history, overlook altogether the fact that the fruit of which man ate, was of the knowledge of good.<sup>b</sup>

Though Henry takes the two trees as real material trees, he divests them of any particular significance or virtue. Of the tree of life, he says, "It was not so much a memorandum of the Fountain and Author of life, nor perhaps any natural means to preserve or prolong life; but was chiefly to be a sign and seal to Adam," &c. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil," he says, was "so called not because it had any virtue in it to beget or increase useful knowledge: surely then it would not have been forbidden." How, does the reader suppose, is this last opinion reconciled with the declaration made after man's eating, "Behold, the man is become

as one of us, to know good and evil"? By making it mere bantering on the part of the Almighty—"A goodly God he makes, does he not! See what he has got!" &c. How, that the tree of life had no intrinsic virtue, with the caveat, "Lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and live for ever"? This he makes also in some sense ironical, or loosely expressed, to mean, "flatter himself with a conceit that he thereby should live for ever." Though all the rest is understood as a scene represented on this earth, the Cherubim and flaming sword seem to be taken metaphorically for the heavenly host. As it is not recorded that they have been removed, or that any way on earth was ever found so guarded, they could not well be taken otherwise.

If we come to reason on this view of the subject, we find ourselves at once on the horns of a dilemma. Either the one sin visited with such dreadful consequences was simply believing the tempter, when man was without the moral sense, not knowing good from evil; or, as Matthew Henry supposes, whilst "the distinction between all other moral good and evil was written in the heart of man by nature" (a gratuitous supposition), a sinless being without any evil nature to prompt him, against light and knowledge at once committed a trespass which evinced all the worst passions of the human heart—"ambition," "pride," "rebellion," "infidelity and cruelty." I do not see how we can escape from one or other alternative; nor can I conceive either to be consonant with reason, or a right sense of the mercy or even justice of God.

Let us see whether we cannot arrive at a more consistent

and rational explanation, keeping much more closely to the text, and evading nothing, by taking it in a metaphorical sense. Man, then, was placed in an earthly Paradise, which ministered spontaneously to all his wants and desires. Beside the other trees "pleasant to the sight and good for food," were two symbolic trees; that they were not like the other trees, rooted in the soil, is, I think, implied by its being said of each alternately, that it was "in the midst of the garden."—Genesis ii. 9, and iii. 3.

Of the fruit of the tree of life little is said: Eve says to the serpent that they might eat of it. The fruit I understand to be literally what it is said to be, life; the natural life, the "living soul," by which man was impelled as all other animals are by instinct to fulfil the ends of his being. The writer seems to think it superfluous to state that they did eat of this fruit; they lived a life of innocent, uninterrupted bliss. The fruit of the other tree is also very plainly declared, what it was, "the knowledge of good and evil." Could God's next best gift to man, the reasoning faculty, be more closely, I might say logically, described. Of this fruit in his first days of innocence, he did not eat; how could he? It was placed within his reach, to be attained by long process; and it is declared that the taste would bring sin and death,—death to the soul, the divine instinct of life. I do not read "Thou shalt not eat" as a prohibition, but the declaration of an order of God's providence. Eve reads it, "Ye shall not eat it, lest ye die."

The discoveries of geology have rendered it necessary to

extend the days of creation to a long series of ages. It is doing no more violence to the narrative of the fall, to prolong it to an indefinite period. Accepting it with such latitude, how closely does it describe to us what reason and experience tell us must have been the progress of the natural history of man. He was created the last and noblest of living beings; probably much more beautiful and powerful as a mere animal, than he has been since he brought sin and suffering by following the light of carnal reason instead of the divine instinct, which led him by fixed and natural laws to good—good of which he had no knowledge, only the fruition. “The sons of men were begotten at the wedding of the heaven and the earth:—mighty infants! you did the right you knew not of, and sinned not, because there was no temptation.” (*Alton Locke.*) As the human race passed from this state of infancy, the tree of knowledge began to appear “a fair tree, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.” The suggestion is made by the serpent, more subtle than the beasts of the field. As I find no intimation in the Bible, and think that the belief was not held by the writers of the Bible, that it was made by a spiritual being, I understand by the subtlety of the serpent, the growing inquisitiveness of man’s heart. It is translated *παρρησια* by St. Paul—“the daring to do all things:” the active curiosity of the reasoning faculty, not shared by the beasts of the field.

I admit that there is a difficulty in dissociating the evidence, that the temptation was made through woman, from the idea of a particular fact. As I purpose going into th

question more fully in the Appendix, I shall merely observe now, that I understand it to refer to the natural disposition of woman—her impulsive and unstable feelings, which, as all history records, are constantly tempting her to display that power which she holds on man's affections, in urging him to acts which his better judgment disapproves. I need not prosecute the subject farther: the *facilis descensus* is before us; man following the dictates and guidance of reason, has been led away to act contrary to the spiritual instinct—the law of nature, the tree of life; which has brought sin and death—the death of the soul, the image of God in which he was created; and Cherubim and a flaming sword are represented as guarding or barring the way of life. I am not aware that, as Henry makes it, the Cherubim ever means angels, still less that angels are ever represented as obstructing the way of life. The meaning of the word being *knowledge* points in another direction; it may mean the inseparable difficulties which reason has to contend with, or the difficulties she creates in finding the good, the way to life. Christ has passed through and opened the way; but He warns us that it is still a strait and narrow one. To give reason for my scepticism respecting the generally received doctrine, that sin was introduced into the world by Satan, would occupy so much space, and detain us so long from the general argument of the Essay, that I must defer it to the the Appendix.

Considering the degeneracy of mankind to have progressed gradually, not by one fatal lapse, I, of course, do not

hold the opinion that any change has taken place in the outward and visible creation, beyond that produced by time and the works and cruelty of man. That a contrary opinion is very generally entertained I am well aware. If the reader wishes to see a full exposition of such opinions he will find it in Dr. Maitland's *Erwin*. He maintains not only that the animal creation were before not subject to disease and death, but that the very elements are changed: storms and tempests, and even darkness being introduced by this one offence of man. He had previously earnestly deprecated the difficulties thrown in the way of a right understanding of the Scriptures by the poets, and especially Milton; but I must say he has more closely followed Milton, and heathen poets who have described the fabulous golden age, in his ideas on the subject, than anything that I can find in the Bible. Geology has proved, almost to demonstration, that there must have been a vast destruction of animal life in ages long antecedent to the creation of man. It is not for us to inquire why a God of love permitted such destruction, or produced a luxuriant vegetable growth, in some respects of greater beauty than now exists, when there were no intelligent beings to appreciate it. These things belong to a dispensation older than our own, the course and end whereof has doubtless been according to the will of Him who is All Goodness. It is the effect of the fruit upon man which claims our attention.

This I understand to be, that as knowledge increased, and reason was developed, man would gradually advance from



natural instinct to ways and habits of his own forming; that in these he would make mistakes and create difficulties. That these would prompt him to further efforts of invention and exertion, which again would involve him in greater perplexity, and bring deeper suffering. The fatal effect of knowledge, however, would be that it would gradually betray man into feelings and actions at variance with the laws of nature, that spiritual instinct which had been his safe guide, and into acts contrary to the law of love, of kindness and forbearance, which we may see still fulfilled in communities of the gentler species of gregarious animals in much greater perfection than has ever yet been reached in the communities of man by knowledge or reason. It is declared to be God's purpose in creation, that man should "replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing that moveth on the earth." Surely it is here intimated that man's reign would not be one of lethargy and inaction, such as must supervene were there no obstacles or difficulties to overcome.

The sufferings entailed on animals subordinate to man in this dispensation, is a problem we can no more solve, than why they should have lived and died in dispensations in which he had no place. We can only see one link of a chain which stretches backward and forward into eternity. St. Paul evidently implies a belief (Romans 8—17, *et seq.*) that if they suffer with us they will be delivered with us, as we shall be if we share the sufferings of our Redeemer; and includes theirs in the sufferings of this present dispensation, which are

“not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” Thus much we know, that although they suffer, they have not comparatively the *knowledge* of evil. The conspicuous part they play in the education of man, is obvious to the most careless observer. With the lessons taught by the gentleness and faithful service rendered to man by many of them, we have not now to do; but with those which by their strength and ferocity dispute his sovereignty and endanger life, or destroy or injure the labours of his hand. These must be included with the noxious weeds which only are mentioned in the curse, or decree of Providence, “In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.”

Pagan philosophers and poets did not hesitate to ascribe to the difficulties thrown in his way all man’s progress in the arts and sciences. There is a passage in Virgil, in the beginning of the *Georgics*, so apposite, that my readers, to whom it may be familiar, must excuse my referring to it: it so wonderfully coincides with the change introduced by knowledge, which we are considering, that it seems impossible to believe but that it must have been derived in some way from revelation. In the Saturnian age, before the reign of Jove, he says there were no husbandmen, no boundaries to fields: all was in common:—

“Ipsaque tellus

Omnia liberius, nullo poscente, ferebat.”

The rivers flowed with wine, and the leaves of the trees distilled honey. All this passed away with the ascendancy of Jupiter.

"Pater ipse colendi

Haud facilem esse viam voluit; primusque per artem

Movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda:

Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno."

Virgil then enumerates several of the enemies of man, introduced into the world: he says,—

"Ut varias usus meditando extunderet artes;"

and it is at least a very singular coincidence, that the first evil named is, that serpents were then first made venomous:

"Ille malum virus serpentibus addidit atris."

It shews how naturally we associate the serpent with all that we detest and abhor. He recapitulates many of the arts of life produced by the necessity of invention, summing up with—

"Labor omnia vincit

Improbis, et duris urguens in rebus egestas."

I must pause here for a moment, to call the reader's attention to the important bearing this passage of Virgil has upon the subject I purpose considering fully in the Appendix—the subjection of man to the power of evil spirits or devils. According to Gibbon, the gods of heathen mythology were universally identified by the early church with the devils of hell—"rebellious spirits who had been degraded from the rank of angels, and cast down into the infernal pit—one demon assuming the name and attributes of Jupiter, another

of Æsculapius, a third of Venus, and a fourth perhaps of Apollo." (*Decline and Fall*, 15.) Though any change in the nature and disposition of animals is not mentioned in the Bible as a consequence of the fall of man; though it was evidently not a part of the belief of St. Paul, for he says that "the whole creation" *κτίσις* was from the beginning "made subject to vanity;" yet here we have the change minutely described by a heathen writer of the preceding age. Again, though it is nowhere declared in the Bible that the fall of man was caused by Satan, yet here the poet represents man as passing from a state of luxurious indolence to one of toil and want, by coming under the iron rule of Jupiter. Have we not here foundation for a suspicion that the time foretold by St. Paul did soon arrive, and that the doctrines of devils derived from Pagan idolatry were engrafted on the faith of the early church, which has produced a plentiful growth of superstition, witchcraft, and sorcery, and at various periods made the history of Christianity a shame and a reproach?

All that we are really told of the fruit of the tree of knowledge is, that it brought death: "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." By this death I cannot understand that of the body. We are told that the words of the sentence are literally,—“In the day of thy eating dying thou shalt die.” This was not carried out as regards the body, nor do I see how it can be reconciled with the doctrine that death followed one single act; but every requirement is fulfilled if we take it as an ever-enduring law, that the spiritual life, the

image of God, would be destroyed in just so far as man would be led by the uncertain light of reason to act in opposition to the laws of God. We are not to understand that there is a necessary antagonism between life and knowledge: on the contrary, we are taught that "the new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him;" it is by the imperfection of knowledge that man is fallen away. If knowledge is even yet said to be in its infancy, how dark and feeble must it have been when mind first began to run counter to instinct, language yet unformed, the experience of the present its only guide!

Had it been revealed that man was created, as Milton describes him, perfect in reason and intelligence, we should be bound to believe it, however difficult it might be to comprehend such a miracle; but when, on the contrary, we are told that he had not tasted of knowledge, we must believe that he made progress in it step by step. Some of the fatal steps he took are recorded, and will be considered hereafter. They must have led him (though it is impossible to say how long a state of comparative innocence may not have continued) rapidly to his fall. A few pages in the sacred history bring us to that state of universal wickedness which brought on the deluge. I have already hinted that I understand by "the image of God," His will, His laws, popularly called the laws of nature, reflected in man. This is, I think, the fruit of the tree of life—the natural life breathed into him and sustained by the Spirit of God.

I know that much offence has been given by the recent

publication of opinions, expressed perhaps abruptly and offensively, which have identified this in-breathing, inspiration of life with instinct, mere animal instinct; but, allowing that there are illimitably wide degrees, and differences in the objects of instinct, I do not see that there is anything derogatory to the majesty of God or the dignity of man in the association. We are told that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters and produced life: we must believe that the Spirit of life is still the same—still moves to the same end, the fulfilment of God's laws. Animals in some sense still reflect the same image of God, in which they were created; but in man that image has been lost by the imperfect guidance of knowledge.

“Reasoning at every step he treads,  
Man yet mistakes his way;  
While meaner things whom instinct leads  
Are seldom known to stray.”

Consider the various range of instinct—that the instinct which teaches an animal with functions scarcely to be distinguished from a plant, to seek its food and grow, is the same as that which teaches the bee in its workmanship and the pigeon in its flight in a way incomprehensible to reason,—and what limit can we place to the same life-breathing power in man, the last born of creation, by which he was impelled perfectly to fulfil the will of God—as perfectly, that is, as a being in whom reason was not yet developed could, in purity

and holiness, until knowledge obscured the reflected image of goodness, and made the being impure and unholy? Nor do I think it irreverent to suppose that man shares the one all-pervading Spirit of life, which impels all things that have life to fulfil the ends of that life, humble or important, nay, even destructive as they may seem in the economy of creation.

It is impossible that man can again in his present state live by this spiritual instinct, conscience, the living soul, or whatever we call it: he must be renewed in *knowledge*; but he cannot live unto God without it. Every good gift is from above: all the good we do is of God, the fruit of the Spirit. Man may do much that appears good, nay, that really is good, by knowledge, from knowing that it is good for man; but he cannot live unto God, unto that which is really good, but by the Spirit. The Spirit and the flesh are contrary one to another: the Spirit is not contrary to knowledge, but to the carnal desires and affections, to which the imperfect guidance of knowledge has given birth. If the Spirit cease to strive with man, the soul, the living soul, dies; nor can it be said to live to God when reason is destroyed. The regenerated man is renewed in knowledge after God's image—after the image of our great Exemplar, who lived a holy sinless life in the flesh, in which all wisdom and all knowledge were brought into perfect conformity with the Spirit; who died and suffered all that flesh could suffer, rose victorious over death and suffering, and left to His own the Spirit the Comforter. "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last

Adam was made a quickening Spirit." Nor can I think it profanation or despising our inheritance, to believe that this Spirit strives, and has always striven, with all men—with the heathen, as well as with the disobedient. Love is the fulfilling of the law: all holy affections, paternal, filial, and brotherly love, are the natural fruit of the tree of life. Does not St. Paul so teach us? "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by *nature* the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." Heathen philosophy reached so far towards the truth, as to declare that the life, the energy of the soul, consisted in the practice of virtue. It is, perhaps, as fair fruit as was ever gathered from the tree of knowledge, but of no avail to pass the Cherubim and the flaming sword, which turneth every way to guard the way of the tree of life.

I know not how far I have made myself intelligible, whilst endeavouring to explain what I understand by death, the fruit of the tree of knowledge. "The leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations," shooting forth by natural growth into spiritual beauty. This beauty cannot be developed in fallen man without knowledge—the knowledge of salvation.

The reader may, perhaps, think some of my opinions fanciful and mere theory; but if he will compare them with the following beautiful passage from Archbishop Leighton, quoted by Coleridge in his *Aids to Reflection*, describing the effects of the fall, I trust he will not find the two at variance in any very essential particular.



“ Yet the human mind, however stunned and weakened by so dreadful a fall, still retains some faint idea, some confused and obscure notions, of the good it has lost, and some remaining seeds of its heavenly Original. It has also still remaining a kind of languid sense of its misery and indigence, with affections suitable to those obscure notions. This at least is beyond all doubt and indisputable, that all men wish well to themselves; nor can the mind of man divest itself of this propensity, without divesting itself of its being. This is what the schoolmen mean when in their manner of expression they say that ‘the will (*voluntas* not *arbitrium*) is carried towards happiness, not simply as will, but as nature.’ And again, to the same purpose: ‘God hath suited every creature He hath made with a convenient good to which it tends, and in the obtainment of which it rests and is satisfied.’ Natural bodies have all their own natural places, whither, if they be not hindered, they move incessantly till they be in it; and they declare by resting there, that they are (as I may say) where they should be. Sensitive creatures are carried to seek a sensitive good, as agreeable to their rank in being, and attaining that aim no further. Now this is the excellency of man, that he is made capable of communion with his Maker; and, because capable of it, is unsatisfied without it: the soul being eut out (so to speak) to that largeness, cannot be filled with less. Though he is fallen from his right to that good, and from all right desire of it, yet not from a capacity of it—no, nor from a necessity of it, for the answering and filling of his capacity.

“Though the heart once gone from God turns continually further away from Him, and moves not towards Him till it be renewed, yet, even in that wandering, it retains that natural relation to God as its centre that it hath no true rest elsewhere, nor can by any means find it. It is made for Him, and is therefore still restless till it meet with Him.

“It is true the natural man takes much pains to quiet his heart by other things, and digests many vexations with hopes of contentment in the end, and accomplishment of some design he hath; but still the heart misgives. Many times he attains not the thing he seeks; but if he do, yet he never attains the satisfaction he seeks and expects in it, but only learns from that to desire something further, and still hunts on after a fancy—drives his own shadow before him, and never overtakes it; and if he did, yet it is but a shadow. And so in running from God; besides the sad end, he carries an interwoven punishment with his sin—the natural disquiet and vexation of his spirit, fluttering to and fro, and finding no rest for the sole of his foot: the waters of inconsistency and vanity covering the whole face of the earth.

“These things are too gross and heavy. The soul, the immortal soul, descended from heaven, must either be more happy or remain miserable. The highest, the uncreated Spirit, is the proper good: the Father of spirits, that pure and full Good, which raises the soul above itself, whereas all other things draw it down below itself. So then it never is well with the soul but when it is near unto God; yea, in its union with Him, married to Him—mismatching itself elsewhere, it

hath never anything but shame and sorrow. 'All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed,' says the prophet (Jeremiah xvii. 13); and the Psalmist, 'They that are far off from Thee shall perish' (Psalm lxxiii. 27). And this is indeed our miserable condition, and it is often expressed this way by estrangedness and distance from God.

"The same sentiments are to be found in the works of Pagan philosophers and moralists. Well, then, may they be made the subject of reflection in our days. And well may the pious Deist, if such a character now exists, reflect that Christianity both teaches the way and provides the means of fulfilling the obscure promises of this *great instinct* for all men, which the philosophy of boldest pretensions confined to the sacred few."

The philosophy here alluded to is doubtless the Platonic, with which the works of Leighton are strongly imbued. The correspondence between that philosophy and the Scripture account of the fallen state of man here glanced at, we shall have to refer to hereafter; for the present we assume that the effect of the fall has been that knowledge has supplanted the image of God—the divine instinct, and brought with it sin and misery. I believe this to be the order of God's providence; as St. Paul declares, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us." Part of that glory will be in the intelligence of the species: man is to be "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" that is, until knowledge and Spirit are in harmony.

We need not perplex ourselves by asking whether God

could not have given man knowledge without suffering. It is enough that it was not His will ; and, humanly speaking, there is no other way of attaining it but in surmounting difficulties—no knowledge of good but by the contrast with evil. Sir Thomas Browne says, “ Virtue (abolish vice) is an idea.” It is, moreover, an idea of which we could form no conception. In Kingsley’s *Yeast*, an intelligent and devout peasant asks, “ Suppose, sir, when Adam and Eve were in the garden, that all the devils had come up and played their fiends’ tricks before them, do you think they would have seen any shame in it ? ” The reply being, “ I really cannot tell,” he continues, “ Then I can, sir. They’d have seen no more harm in it than there was harm already in themselves ; and that was none. A man’s eyes can only see what they’ve learnt to see.” “ A favourite dictum of Carlyle’s,” it is added. The converse must be equally true, that they could have seen no good in good until they had learnt to see it. Learning is by knowledge, and knowledge is of good and evil.

It was, indeed, far back that I turned aside from the consideration of beauty, to enquire how it was to be discerned. I trust, however, that the subjects into which we have been led, have not been found uninteresting or irrelative. We can now understand why all is not beauty—why “ the whole creation has been made subject to vanity ” or imperfection : that it was destined for a school in which an imperfect being was to be trained towards perfection. Our great Exemplar was said to have been “ perfected through suffering.” This

could only be in the sense that to be our perfect Exemplar He had to bear our sorrows. He was perfect always : man literally struggles through suffering towards perfection. Nor is the suffering without alloy : the fruit of the tree of knowledge is pleasant to the taste, pleasanter from the difficulty of reaching it. Without sorrow, there could be no joy on earth ; and even in heaven, it is said, there is more joy over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine of the just.

Material beauty is, as it were, the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual beauty—the beauty of holiness ; and the elements of outward beauty are used, in all language, to represent the elements and properties of spiritual beauty. Considering that in the time which must have elapsed before language could have been elaborated, all ideas of good and evil must have been conveyed to the mind through the senses, it may not seem extraordinary that the language in which we describe mental impressions or ideas should correspond with our sensual perception : a very little reflection will, however, I think, convince any one that there must be more than a casual coincidence.

I have already assumed the elements of beauty to be light, life, and harmony. Let us first consider how these apply to inward or spiritual beauty—the beauty of the soul. So closely are these elements identified in the language of Scripture with spiritual beauty, that one might almost believe that they were first applied to the divine image reflected in the soul of man, and from that to outward and visible beauty. St. John declares that the message they were sent to deliver is, “ that

God is light; and in Him is no darkness at all." Our Saviour tells us that it is not when the light of the eye is extinguished that we are really in darkness, but when the light that is in us is darkness. To dispel this darkness, the Sun of Righteousness arises: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." The primary element of righteousness is the illumination of the Spirit. Again: sin is the disease of the soul; "there is no soundness in it." Christ is the great Physician of the soul, to restore it to a state of health—to bring salvation; having typified His eternal mission at His first advent, by giving sight to the blind and healing bodily diseases. Harmony is the Alpha and Omega of the spiritual beauty—the very "bond of perfectness," "the unity of the Spirit." Light, life, and harmony are the elements of all beauty, of which love is the moving principle.

There is another phenomenon or patent fact which appears to me so clearly to prove a common origin between moral and material beauty, that I must be allowed a little space to its consideration. This is, that the highest and purest exhibition of each has a tendency to produce tender emotion—to unman and depress—melt us to tears. I need not pause to prove the fact. We all know that nothing so easily thus takes us by surprise, as to hear of or witness some act of pure unselfish kindness or deep love; we know also, by experience, and by the recorded testimony of others, that the same overpowering emotions are excited by natural beauty. Nor is this effect produced by the sublimest aspects of nature only, as Coleridge bursts forth in his *Hymn before Sunrise* in the vale of Chamouni,—

"Awake my soul! not only silent praise  
 Thou owest! Not alone these swelling tears,—  
 Mute tears and thrilling ecstacy."

But Rogers, painting the busy and cheerful beauty of an Italian vintage, says,—

"'Tis enough to make  
 The sad man merry, the benevolent one  
 Melt into tears, so general is the joy."

Mr. Payne Knight is the only writer on taste and beauty who, as far as I am aware, has attempted to account for this emotion. "Whatever," he says, "tends to exalt the soul to enthusiasm, tends to melt it at the same time; whence tears are the ultimate effect of all very sublime impressions on the mind—as much those of a joyous, as those of a melancholy cast."

"My plenteous joys,  
 Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
 In drops of sorrow,"

says the benevolent Duncan, on contemplating the prosperity of his kingdom, and the happiness and filial attachment of his subjects. Every generous, as well as every tender feeling of sympathy, when it reaches a certain pitch of rapture and enthusiasm, relieves its fulness in tears. "Οὐτο κοινον τι αγαχα και λυπη δακρυα εστιν." (Xenoph. *Hellenics*.)

Now, that all enthusiasm has a tendency to produce this effect, I cannot admit. War, ambition, the chase, for instance,

do not. Generous and tender feelings, do under certain conditions ; but it is not necessary that the mind should be strung to enthusiasm ; it is more frequently, as I have said, taken by surprise. Neither is there any connexion, as seems to be implied by the context, between this emotion and that produced by tragic representations, from which we derive pleasure rather than pain. Tears of joy flow from a purer source : the unexpected awakening of that yearning after the good which Leighton says is innate in the soul ; the sound of “ the Lord’s song in a strange land ; ” a glimpse of something from which we feel estranged—our forfeited birthright.

This solution of the paradox has frequently been given by writers of the German school, and those who have formed their opinions upon the Platonic philosophy. In some, the depression amounts to a morbid sense of isolation and exile. There is a fine passage from Jean Paul Richter, in the *Life of Mrs. Hemans*, in which all aspects of moral and visible beauty are represented as only sources of unhappiness—things not belonging to this world ; relieved only by the reflection, “ God be thanked there is no such asking eye directed upwards towards Heaven, to which Death will not one day bring an answer.” Thus, too, Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*—he is looking at the rainbow : “ The sight made him sad. ‘ Ah ! ’ said he within himself, ‘ do the fairest hues of life appear, then, only on a ground of black ? and must drops fall if we are to be charmed ? A bright day is like a dim one if we look at it unmoved : and what can move us but some silent hope that the unborn inclination of our spirits shall not be always without an object ? The recital of a noble action moves us ; the

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sight of everything harmonious moves us ; we feel as if we were not then altogether in a foreign land, and fancy we are nearer to the home towards which our best and inmost wishes are unweariedly tending.’”

Michael Angelo, in a sonnet translated by Mr. J. E. Taylor, who delineates him as a Platonic poet, hesitates whether to ascribe the feeling of sadness at the sight of beauty to Plato’s theory of reminiscence or to a higher source :—

“ I know not if it be the imaged light  
Of its first Maker which the soul doth feel ;  
Or if, derived from Memory and the mind,  
Some other beauty shine into the heart ;  
Or if the ardent ray of its first state  
Doth still resplendent beam within the mind,  
Leaving I know not what unrestful pain,  
Which is, perchance, the cause that makes me weep.”

That the doctrines of Plato and of Revelation should give an equally satisfactory solution of the same problem, need cause little surprise when we consider how closely in a philosophical view they approach each other. The identity between the good and the beautiful was more formally and logically, though not more fully set forth by Plato than it is in the Hebrew Scriptures ; and the innate longing in the soul after them, Plato no doubt suggested to Leighton. Frederick von Schlegel, in his *Philosophy of History*, draws the following parallel between the Platonic system and the doctrines of inspiration, with which I will conclude this digression.

“ The great disciple of Socrates sought, by a path of en-

quiry completely new—completely foreign to the Greeks—by a range of speculation which soared far above the world of sense and outward experiences, as well as above mere logic, to return to the supreme Godhead, infinitely exalted above all nature: deriving the notion of the Deity from immediate intuition, primeval revelations, or profound internal reminiscence. By the doctrine of reminiscence, which is the fundamental tenet of the Platonic system, this philosophy has a strong coincidence or affinity with the Indian doctrine of Metempsychosis, by the supposition it involves of the prior existence of the human soul. To such a notion of the preëxistence of the soul, in the literal sense of the term, no system of Christian philosophy could easily subscribe.<sup>4</sup> But if, as there is no reason to prevent us, we should understand this Platonic notion of reminiscence in a more spiritual sense, as the awakening or resuscitation of the consciousness of the Divine image implanted in our souls—as the soul's perception of that image, this theory would then perfectly coincide with the Christian doctrine of the Divine image originally stamped on the human soul, and the internal illumination of the soul by the renovation of that image; and hence we ought in no way to be astonished that the Platonic mode of thinking—for such it is, rather than an exclusive system—as it is the first great philosophy of revelation, clothed and propounded in a European form, should have ever appeared so captivating to the profound thinkers of Christianity.”

Whilst we are on the subject of the Greek philosophy, it may be as well to observe, that though there is little said by

Plato's great pupil, Aristotle (at least in those of his works with which I have any acquaintance), on the subject of beauty, in that little he entirely agrees with Plato in making it identical with the good ; and indirectly we fall into a train of thought which traces our perception of it to the same point at which we have already arrived from an opposite direction.

All are agreed with him in making it a necessary quality of beauty that it should give pleasure. Following the analytical method, he proceeds to enquire what pleasure is. This question has received little attention from English writers on beauty. Burke, it is true, has devoted a good deal of space to it ; but he takes very low ground, arguing from the mere animal sensations of pleasure and pain. These, he says, are " simple ideas, incapable of definition," and are independent of each other. Pleasure is not the removal of pain, nor pain the removal of pleasure : since we pass into one or the other from a state of indifference, which he considers the ordinary state of the mind. Let this be granted, we get no nearer to the nature of pleasure ; nor does he bring us nearer. As a blow gives positive pain, as delicacies gratify the taste, and music the ear, so, he says, certain objects give positive pleasure or pain, by their effect upon the optic nerve. The pleasure arising from beauty is thus made a mere bodily sensation, in which the heart and the affections have no share. I do not mean to say that this was his opinion, but it is the only inference to be drawn from his philosophy, which Mr. Payne Knight says was opposed to his opinion. Let us return to

Aristotle. "Pleasure," he says, "is a kind of emotion, or moving of the soul, and a rapid and perceptible restoring of it to that which is its nature." (*Rhet.* i., c. 10.) The definition is very comprehensive, to include all pleasure, pure or vicious, according to what man has made the nature of his soul; but the general scope is, I think, obvious: that the natural state of the soul is a state of pleasure, below which it is very generally depressed by the adverse circumstances that beset it whilst it is united to the body; and anything which excites and raises it above the influence of these circumstances is pleasure. But the pleasure arising from beauty must be pure: the beautiful he had previously defined: "That which being eligible itself is praiseworthy; or that which being good gives pleasure because it is good." (*Rhet.* i., c. 9.)

Thus revelation, reason, and experience, the idealistic theories of Plato, and the sober matter-of-fact arguments of Aristotle, all agree in demonstrating that natural beauty is the exhibition of the *good*: in other words, of the love of God in the works of creation. But hitherto we have no clue to solve the question of degrees of beauty. That what is best must be most beautiful, is disproved by experience; the most consummate beauty being often lavished on things the most useless and evanescent—nay, hurtful and pernicious; whilst those which are useful and beneficial are homely and unattractive: the tares are more beautiful than the wheat. Plato maintained that there was no visible good, only the reflection of it: Scripture says also, "There is none good save God;" but it teaches us also to seek God in His works: "The

works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." I am content, then, to seek the elements of beauty in the works of creation, and in the order and manner in which it is revealed that they were produced: that is, in Light, Life and Health, and Harmony; the opposites of beauty being Darkness, Disease and Death, and Chaos, Confusion, or Monstrosity.

It is necessary, however, to premise that we must confine natural beauty to outward and visible things. Love is everywhere working; as surely, more wonderfully perhaps, in the bowels of the earth than on the surface; in the production and nutrition of vegetable and animal life than in their development and growth; in the skeleton and interior structure of the body than in the outward forms; but these operations of Nature are hidden from us, only revealed by an interruption of her course, and therefore not naturally beautiful, but the reverse.

And here, before proceeding to apply my principles, it is necessary to state that I have been brought to regard natural beauty under two aspects, corresponding in wonderful agreement with the two aspects in which we are taught to regard the love of the Almighty, as proceeding from Him as our Creator, or as our Saviour and Redeemer. It would, perhaps, be impossible, either in religion or nature, to draw a line of demarcation between these two heads of beauty, but the distinction exists. The purity, the spiritual beauty of childhood is not more distinct from that of the aged Christian purified in the furnace of affliction, than is the outward beauty of

plant or animal, bursting forth in bloom, or growing up to maturity, from the more strongly marked and sobered beauty which gilds every period of their decline. The first I call native beauty, the beauty of creation ; the second, softening or healing beauty, the beauty of redemption. Nor is this lesson taught only by animated nature. The inert, "time-mangled matter" of which the earth is composed, recites it even more forcibly. The once uniform level of the earth's crust (not to trace further back its geological history) has been torn and upheaved by earthquakes and volcanoes ; and from the blackened mass of ruin and desolation has sprung all the variety of mountain and valley, lake and river, toned into harmony and clothed with beauty by the hand of time. This variety existed, no doubt, long before the creation of man ; but the same processes are still in operation. And not only do convulsions of the elements, and other natural causes, produce ruin and decay, but man defaces to his power ; and even his attempts to beautify stand out harsh and raw amidst the harmony of nature. These are again toned down by time ; and man's works, and the ruin of his works, are clothed with beauty by the touch of nature—

"Nature softening and concealing,  
And busy with a hand of healing."

Many of the qualities of this kind of beauty are so diametrically opposed to Burke's theories of the beautiful, that there arose in this country a new school, the disciples of which pro-

ceased to have discovered "a new sense," which they named the Picturesque, as being quite distinct from beauty. This subject is so mixed with art, that I must reserve it for a separate Essay. Enough, I think, has been said to warrant the assertion, that there is in nature a redeeming beauty—a visible evangel corresponding to our spiritual regeneration from sin and suffering.

We shall add intensity to the train of thought here suggested, if we turn our attention for a moment to the elements of which the world is composed. Let us take them according to the popular classification, sufficiently accurate for our purpose, as Earth, Air, Water, and Fire. Not one of these can, perhaps, be considered in itself an object of natural beauty, which is produced by their combination and operation upon each other. Air is invisible; so is water also, except when acted upon by external circumstances; fire is never visible in nature, unless produced by disturbance and convulsion; and the inert matter of the earth seems made only to be concealed by the vegetation which it nourishes. Perhaps, strictly speaking, the only purely native beauty is to be found in living nature, as the word nature (*birth*) implies. And how wonderfully do these material elements agree with those of which man—the whole man—body, soul, and spirit, is composed. Fire—the spark of life, the fabled principle of life, stolen from heaven; Air—the breath, the spirit; and Water, the very life-blood of creation—ascending as through minute capillaries, to be purified in the lungs of the atmosphere; thence precipitated and flowing through arterial conduits—

streamlets and rivers, to auricles and ventricles—lakes, seas, and oceans : circulating through the system for ever and for ever. The inert matter of the earth, or dust, that on which the energising elements act and mould into form and life, represents the mortal body—the tenement for a time of the immortal spirit, the residuum left when the spirit has departed : “Dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return.” Again : consider the tremendous power of the active elements ! the havoc and destruction produced when these ministers, which by their united action carry on the economy of nature, burst the chains which bind them, or clash in antagonism : conflagrations, volcanic eruptions, inundations, tornadoes, lightnings, a spark in the choke-damp, or the expansion of steam ! Is not all this written in the book of nature for man’s instruction ? Do not the terrible elements out of which the Creator evolves physical beauty, teach him in language too plain to be misunderstood, that it is His purpose, out of elements as fearful and destructive when not under control, eventually to produce moral and spiritual harmony and beauty ? I can only allude to the deeper mysteries of which these energising elements are made the sacramental emblems : baptism by water, by the Spirit, and by fire ; emblems of purifying, illuminating, sanctifying, and redeeming love. As the material types—water, air, and fire, act not independently of each other, but unite their forces in producing and sustaining life, light, and health in the visible creation, so the immaterial antitypes combine in giving life, light, and salvation to the soul.



I must now return to our immediate subject—

“The outward shows of sky and earth.”

I have to demonstrate that the beauty of all “outward shows” results from the elements—light, life, and harmony.

We will begin with the first of the two heads, under which Wordsworth here classes landscape-scenery: the beauty of the heavens. This is a thing of itself, removed from us and above us, opening to us the immensity of space, studded with orbs of light, worlds and suns, the hosts of heaven. Some such thoughts cannot but obtrude when we gaze upon it; but we have here only to regard it as a source of beauty. On the sky, perhaps more than on anything else, depends the character and expression of nature. Constable says, “The sky is the source of light in nature, and governs everything,” —“the key note, the standard of scale, and the chief organ of sentiment.”

Few will, I think, question that the beauty of the sky results chiefly from light and colour, and harmony. The principles of light and shade and colour have been investigated by abler pens than mine, and I have neither the inclination nor the power to discuss them here. Suffice to say, that the beauty of light and colour depends upon brilliancy, purity, tenderness, depth, and harmony; the opposites being dimness, or dullness, muddiness, hardness, vapidity, and discord. It is not contended that the brightest colour, or even the brightest light, is of necessity the most beautiful. Brilliancy of light

attests its perfection, but it is too powerful in its intensity for our organs of vision. So of colours : the brightest and most intense are perhaps individually the most beautiful ; but they require greater variety to bring them into harmony, and in large quantities are harsh and fatiguing to the sight. Still, all colour should be bright and clear, not dim or muddy—the faintest neutral tint may be so. These few obvious postulates will be found sufficient practically to test the beauty of light and colour.

Harmony is a word of the widest import ; being, in fact, the unity and completeness of nature, and the last aim and object of the poet, of which he so frequently falls short.

“ Infelix operis summi, quia ponere totum nescit.”

Most subtle theories and strange fancies have been elicited by philosophers from its analysis. Let us take it popularly as *the perfect combination of perfect parts*. It is often said that nature is always in harmony ; but unless we admit degrees and deficits, we shall not fully appreciate the power of this crowning glory. I shall make my object better understood by applying these remarks on light and harmony to the beauty of skies.

No one gazing upon a beautiful sky can for a moment doubt that much of the beauty depends upon light and colour. Let him contrast the hues of a glowing sunset with the dull monotony of a leaden gleamless sky, and he will be satisfied thus far. To weigh and estimate these qualities, which are

indeed one, I can only refer him to the few brief remarks just made on light and colour.

The question of harmony in skies will require a little more consideration. And, first, we may remark that harmony may be regarded as either positive or negative. Where there is nothing to interrupt it, we say there is harmony; but monotony is not harmony, which is the combination of parts. In music, it is said that harmony cannot be produced with less than three notes; and Mr. Field, in his *Chromatics*, lays down the same law with regard to colours; but these are minutiae into which I cannot enter. Again, there is a certain harmony in the fury of the elements—the harmony and order of strife and war; but the sentiment of harmony is concord and peace, most forcibly exhibited in skies in the serenity of evening.

Nor is life, the third element of beauty, altogether wanting in skies. The flight of birds and other winged creatures imparts it in some degree; but the energising force of the elements themselves exhibits the most abundant evidences of living power. Clouds suggest the presence of life, not only by their motion but in their forms. The curve has been called the line of beauty, simply, I believe, because it is the line of life and motion. The tissues of plants and animals are composed of tubes and globular forms. All motion, from that of the planets in their spheres to the pebbles rolling on the beach, tends to the circular form; and there is a wonderful assimilation between the spiral motion of ascending flame, smoke, and vapour surcharged with moisture, and that of the

stems and tendrils of climbing plants. In many beautiful skies, indeed, the clouds lose their convolutions, and lie in horizontal strata, but lightly suspended in the firmament: they suggest ideas of repose, not of death. Harmony of form in clouds must, however, for the most part be negative; enough that there be nothing to interrupt it. This is most effectually done when forms appear which you are quite unprepared to expect. Geometrical figures, and the forms of living things closely imitated, invest clouds with a character of portent or monstrosity always opposed to harmony.

The heavens by night display the same elements of beauty subdued and modified. Strong light and colour are excluded, but are almost compensated by the pure silvery brilliancy of the heavenly orbs. We cannot, however, coldly contemplate and weigh the component parts of a scene the character of which is sublimity—sublimity depending much on association. The world is, as it were, shut out, and we look forth into infinity, catching glimpses of other worlds, and suns, the centres of other systems. To these remarks on the beauty of skies, I will only add that it exhibits in a very striking and affecting manner the two aspects I have suggested—creative and redeeming beauty; though it must not be expected that a line of partition between them can be drawn with any accuracy. At the dawn of day, as streak after streak illumines the horizon till light bursts forth from darkness, as in the morning of creation, everything speaks of youth, and hope and joy, reaching forward to the mid-day fervour of manhood; whilst in the redeeming glory which gilds the approach

of night, we trace the bright but solemn radiance which gilds the decline of the just.

Of the material elements which compose the surface of the earth, there is little to observe. Nature is constantly at work to clothe them with living beauty. The various colours and abrupt forms of the soil, when partially disclosed—even wide-spread sands—may add to the variety and picturesque beauty of a scene, though, as a general rule, they are not in themselves objects of beauty; but the power of the active elements in action have, as already hinted, crystallized and solidified the sedimentary deposits in huge masses, and again torn and uplifted them into sublime and magnificent forms, which testify of the terrible energy of life. The pervading characteristic of terrestrial beauty is strength: nothing so effectually destroys its harmony as the appearance of instability: cliffs sliding from their bases, or leaning *aiguilles*. Some approach to the regularity of geometrical figures is here not out of character, being naturally produced by the processes just adverted to; but it must not reach to the fantastic. Natural arches, towers, and pinnacles, even the appearance of masonry in basaltic strata, are more amusing than beautiful, though immensity of size will exalt them to sublimity. Perhaps the most disagreeable form of the surface of the earth is the round and lumpish—mere heaps of inert matter. The graceful slope of hills and mountains is beautiful, as the accompaniment of more varied forms; wide level plains—even the sands of the desert, impress us with sublime emotions, and by atmospheric effect may become even beautiful.

Harmony in nature tones everything into beauty. Coleridge says, "The old definition of beauty in the Roman School of Painting was *il piu nell' uno*, 'Multitude in unity;' and there is no doubt that such is the principle of beauty." (*Table Talk*.) It is a principle—a *sine quâ non*, but not the only principle. The most harmonious combination of ugly parts can only produce negative beauty—they cease to offend. In pure nature, harmony is seldom disturbed; but a glaring ugly new building will destroy it in the loveliest scenery.

Of the other element, life, we can only expect to trace emblems in the earth's crust; but the defect is abundantly supplied by the profusion of animal and vegetable life, which we must consider separately. The grand forms of rocks and mountains speak of the living power which built them, as do also their beautiful colours; but the colour even of rocks long exposed to the atmosphere, is chiefly produced by vegetation. The brilliancy and intense colour of gems and precious stones connect them with light; but these scarcely form a feature of the natural beauty of the earth.

Fire is only rendered visible in nature in strife and tumult, and yet it is beautiful; terrific in its energy, cheering and attractive in its milder aspects, one of the greatest blessings—one of the most useful slaves of man: apt emblem of fierce and energetic passions, which in their fury waste and destroy, but under control are the vanguard in the battle of life. Our God is said to be a consuming fire; but He is a purifying and redeeming fire also. The reader will at once recognise in fire

all the elements of beauty : brilliant light and colour, motion, and living harmonious forms.

The element opposed to fire is water : scarcely less terrible in power, as beneficent in its uses, contributing much more largely to the visible beauty of nature. The beauty of water is closely allied to that of light ; indeed, in landscape scenery its most powerful effect is to spread light by reflection. This power depends on its purity and transparency. The beauty of water is always diminished by colouring matter. Shallow seas are green, the green of seaweed and the yellow sands below being mingled with the reflected blue. In the deep ocean the latter only is seen. I believe, though I have never seen them, that the blue waters of the Rhone, which are said to retain their colour as they flow through the Lake of Geneva, can only be coloured by their greater purity giving them greater power of reflection. The colour of water, then, is borrowed ; but it is exquisite in its effect—reflecting all objects in a tranquil mirror, or scattering them with the least breath of motion into every variety of form and colour. It shares with the air and sky the glories of the rainbow. Perhaps its most striking characteristic is life—motion ; either gliding devious like a thing of life, suggesting the thought that “the river glideth at his own sweet will,” or roaring with the voice of ocean. Ever-welling fountains have always been regarded with superstitious awe—the fabled haunt of deities ; in ancient mythology every river was a god, and they are still more frequently personated than any other objects of natural scenery. Water sometimes disturbs harmony by too

much glare, but much more frequently is the chief element in its most perfect development.

We have yet to consider water under another, a very striking, I may say awful aspect. We have hitherto regarded it as the emblem of life ; but removed from the influence of the sun in heaven, the blood congeals, and reveals with startling conviction the cold still image of death. What beautiful imagery too ! The iceberg, the glacier, the sparkling crystals of hoar-frost, the spotless winding-sheet that enwraps the still forms of the wintry landscape, and the crystal walls that enclose as in a tomb the lakes and rivers, and in cold latitudes even the roaring seas.

Here it may, perhaps, be urged that my principles fail. Life an element of beauty : how, then, beauty in death ? The thought forcibly arrested the attention of Leslie in writing his *Handbook for Young Painters*. After some very judicious remarks on the peculiar specific beauty attaching to old age, disease, and calamity, he adds, " But the beauty of death is not so easily explicable." Into this subject he enters with his usual perspicuity and fine feeling ; it is, however, only the specific characteristic of all these aspects of beauty that he considers ; its generic character in disease, old age, and even death, will, I think, be found such as I have attempted to trace—the redeeming glory which softens every change from perfect beauty to corruption—the bright hues of the fading leaf. In the corpse the work of corruption is not complete, the form of life remains : colour has faded away into marble purity, in serene unbroken harmony. And so it is in the ice-



berg, the snow-clad landscape, and in the hoar-frost: there are forms, often strange and unearthly, but exquisite forms which tell of the energising life of the elements, or familiar forms wrapped in the pale clothing of the grave.

It now only remains to speak of the beauty of the things of life, vegetable and animal. The task will be comparatively easy; the natural laws affecting the processes of life being more regular than we find in things inanimate, and beauty depending on more fixed and certain principles. It would be mere reiteration to attempt to demonstrate that the beauty of trees, plants, and flowers results from colour, life, and harmony. I shall do this most satisfactorily by showing that their comparative beauty depends on the extent and proportion in which they partake of these qualities.

If, as Payne Knight admits, the beauty of certain plants and animals has uniformly been conceded, the converse must hold good: there must be some which are not allowed to be beautiful. On what does the difference depend? Though to solve this problem may not be difficult, the details we should have to enter upon would be endless, should we take them *in extenso*: the forms of life being so complicated, the parts so many of which the whole is composed, each particular part perfect in itself, and its excellence to be determined by rules of its own. Thus in a tree, there is the stem, the branch, the leaf, the blossom, each with a distinct appropriate character. In animal life, as we approach the higher orders, and man the summit of the scale, we have added to still more complicated parts, the grace of motion, distinction of sex, and

higher orders of beauty, intellectual and moral expression. I can only repeat that I know of no element or quality of beauty (though of course, there are many which are accidental or specific), which apply to all forms of vegetable and animal life, except those I have adopted—light, life, and harmony.

All will admit that flowering trees and plants—those commonly so called—are *per se* more beautiful than those in which the blossom is so colourless and insignificant as not to attract notice. Take, for instance, the rose and the box-tree; both beautiful, both cited by Isaiah, springing in the desert as emblems of moral beauty in the wilderness of sin. When not in bloom, we might be at a loss to which to give the preference, both being elegant and harmonious in their living forms; but when the buds and blossoms of the rose appear there is no longer room for doubt; and why? There is a great accession of colour, a further development of life, and more perfect harmony, both of form and colour. Flowers are, indeed, as perfect examples of natural beauty as can be found. Plato calls beauty the bloom of goodness; and our Saviour points to the lilies of the field as arrayed in a glory surpassing that of Solomon. Should it be objected that lilies are white and colourless, I reply that both white and black, and neutral tints must in the harmony of nature be regarded as colours. This is laid down as an axiom by Mr. Field, and it is indisputable. Dead black or white, spread before the eye like a cloth, is a colourless blank; but objects of these hues exhibit in the play of light and shade most delicate

tints of colour. The association with purity makes white flowers especially attractive.

But even without flowers all forms of vegetable life are beautiful, but not equally so. In forest trees it seems almost invidious to draw distinctions ; but some species have always been considered more beautiful than others, and in trees of the same species some far exceed others : the inequality in both cases contributing to the harmony of nature. For there are many kinds of harmony. There is the harmony of form of the individual tree, to which my definition of the perfect combination of perfect parts most properly applies. There is the harmony of trees in groups of the same species, to which inequality and irregularity of growth contribute by variety ; which irregularity is not demanded so much in groups of different kinds. And again, there is harmony with the scene and situation in which they are placed : stately oaks growing out of the clefts of a rock, would appear as much out of place as twisted little dwarfs in the park or forest. It would be vain to attempt to touch upon the countless circumstances that bear upon this point : as a general rule, nature is always in harmony, both in form and effect ; because she works by unvarying laws, though with unequal materials.

The ash is generally allowed to be more beautiful than the oak, though the latter is more grand and majestic. The graceful drooping boughs of the ash, its branching palm-like leaves waving to every breeze, and smooth erect stem, are more suggestive of life, more harmonious in combination, than are the more rugged *contours* of the oak. The elm takes

a place between the two, and the three group together in perfect harmony. If we compare the fern tribe with the *fungi*, the palms with the prickly pear, we see the elements of life and harmony of form and their opposites in stronger contrast.

Colour is an important element in vegetable beauty ; but it appears at first sight to be distributed with some degree of caprice. *Fungi* almost rival flowers in this quality. It is lavished with equal prodigality on some of the lower orders of animal life, as though Nature would leave in her margin, in detached spots, the bright unbroken colours which are softened and blended into tone in her large pictures.

Each species of tree, plant, and flower has its own specific beauty, and must be tried by rules of its own. One is not more beautiful than another, because one or all the elements are exaggerated ; the oak because it approaches the form of the ash, or the fir that of the willow : their character and expression are destroyed. Perhaps there is no criterion better adapted to decide this point than that adopted by Sir Joshua Reynolds as the test of beauty in man : the central form—the most common ; any deviation from which, in the whole body, or in any particular member or feature, he held to be a deviation towards deformity.

Everywhere in vegetable life evidence may be traced of the presence of the moving principle of beauty, love ; as in the winning confidence with which climbing and parasitic plants twine around or cling to trees, plants, and other objects, clothing them with a beauty not their own, or covering as

with a mantle the ravages of decay. But I must proceed to higher examples of beauty—in things partaking in some measure of the knowledge of good and evil and its penalties, with a much wider range of faculties and action, and brought thereby under certain and definite rules.

“ Quos ultra citraque nequit se flectere rectum.”

In the vegetable world there is some approach to uniformity in each particular species. In animals the rule becomes more absolute ; and any deviation from symmetry and proportion is at once detected. Even in colour there is little variety in each species in a state of nature. Our enquiry, however, has little to do with specific rules. The hippopotamus in perfect proportion is an ugly monster : the question is, whether an animal more beautiful derives its superiority from exhibiting the elements I have adopted in greater perfection.

We will take the leopard. First, as to colour. I waive the consideration of expression ; for, though undoubtedly to be observed in animals, it is too subtle and evanescent for argument. The colour of the leopard is brilliant, clear, soft, and harmonious : the glossy texture of the skin producing much variety of reflected light. The hide of the hippopotamus is muddy in colour, dull, and monotonous. Next, as to the characteristics of life. The attitudes and movements of the leopard are easy and graceful ; the lines of form curved and flowing, combining great power with elegance. The hippopotamus has only unwieldy strength to set against these

advantages ; his gait is heavy and ungainly, as is his form. There will be no question which is most harmonious as a whole, in *contour*, colour, and expression.

It would be easy to produce still stronger contrasts ; to compare the peacock with the vulture, the butterfly with the snail ; but unless I have succeeded in convincing the reader, in opposition to Hume, that beauty has an existence independent of the mind of the beholder—in opposition to the diletantists, that there are principles of beauty in nature independent of art and science, I should despair of attaining my object by multiplying examples. I do not attempt to lay down rules by which to determine of two things beautiful or ugly which is the more so ; nor even in individuals to give an exact standard of beauty. This has never been attempted in morals : philosophy does not decide whether generosity or temperance be the greater virtue, or the exact mean between generosity and extravagance : this must be determined by reason—the knowledge of good and evil. So it is in visible beauty : certain elements singly or combined produce it ; the opposite elements tend to destroy it : to determine what objects possess the elements of beauty in greatest perfection must be left to the judgment.

It is true, as Sir Thomas Browne observes, that all things have “ been created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms ; and have passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all which He had made was good ; that is, conformable to His will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and

beauty." By this I understand that everything is perfect in its kind: best adapted to the niche in creation which it is intended to occupy; but, to use his own words applied to virtue, "*beauty, abolish deformity, is an idea.*" We could have no knowledge of good without the presence of evil. Many of the lowest forms of animal life are almost without shape or colour to distinguish them from the inert matter in which they are imbedded, and in which more perfect forms could not live. The mud-coloured sole, with no more power than to flap itself along the bottom of the sea on one side, the mouth and eyes being distorted to the other to catch its food and the light from above, is better suited to its place than would be the brilliant mackerel, which shoots so rapidly above it; but must we, therefore, say that they are equally beautiful—no more deformity in the one than in the other? The very imperfection of the one constitutes its perfection for its proper place.

It now only remains to consider the beauty of the highest organization of created beings: the human form. Fortunately I have not to specify the numberless particulars on which this beauty depends; but to shew that in this, as in all things else, light, life, and harmony are the guiding principles. The enquiry is, however, beset with some difficulty; inasmuch as man is further removed than any other creature from his natural state. What he was as first created, we can never know; probably much more powerful and noble in form than in his present artificial state—marred and degenerated through sin and suffering—in which I do not place him very high in the scale of mere animal beauty. Doubtless his organization

is much the most perfect; but this is no test of external beauty. Take him from the cradle to the grave, and deprive him of all assistance from art, and his beauty would suffer in comparison with that of many of the inferior animals. It is in moral and intellectual expression that man stands supreme in glory and beauty. These attributes we must dismiss for the present, and bring the outward form of man to the ordeal of the elements of beauty. For the reasons just given, it would not be so convenient to compare him with other animals, as man with man, in order to determine on what beauty as a general rule depends.

Some writers of the last century, to prove that beauty depends on habit and association, not on fixed principles, have quoted triumphantly an opinion expressed by the celebrated John Hunter, that the first man was probably black. As this is mere conjecture, and not much to the purpose, I shall not dwell upon it; the question is, whether a black man or woman is, *cæteris paribus*, as beautiful as a white one. We could not well hit upon a case better calculated to try the soundness of my premises. Blacks would, doubtless, give the palm to blacks. But might not an accomplished and intelligent negro be compelled to admit that, on the principles which determine beauty of colour in all other things, the so-called white has the advantage over the so-called black? In brilliancy, purity, tender gradations, and harmony of colour, the uniform dusky hue of the African can never compete with the variety of tints in complexion, hair, eyes, lips, &c., of the European. We may, indeed, naturally conclude that man would be most



perfectly developed under circumstances most adapted for his comfort and enjoyment in temperate climes, rather than where exposed to burning suns or the extremes of cold. It is difficult to imagine man suffered either extreme in his first Paradise. The colour of the human form is most beautiful when it indicates life, health, and harmony in greatest perfection.

No one will question that animal beauty in man is most perfectly exhibited in health, and in the form which indicates the attributes of life. This appearance varies in each sex, and in each period of our existence, the distinctions in which are pretty well understood. Mr. Leslie has touched upon them, with his usual discrimination, in his *Handbook*. He also glances at the beauty of disease and old age. This, he says, is "chiefly, though not entirely, spiritual." That it is not entirely so, he explains by shewing that coarse and common features are refined by disease and old age, and that in disease the brilliancy of the complexion is often much enhanced. This illustrates my theory of redeeming beauty, which softens the changes which take place in all things in the progress towards corruption ; and in no way militates with my position, that human beauty is most perfectly displayed in health, and in the period when the form has arrived at its highest perfection. I have already observed that the curve is the line of beauty, because it is the line of life.

Over all and through all human beauty there must be harmony in colour and form ; including perfect symmetry and proportion, grace and dignity in motion and repose, refinement, delicacy, strength, majesty, according to age, sex, and

circumstances. One disproportioned or incongruous part or feature, in form or colour, will as effectually destroy harmony as a false note in music.

But, again I repeat it, it is now impossible to regard man as a mere animal in a state of nature. Without imagining other changes which must have taken place by the knowledge of good and evil, clothing has become not merely proper but a necessity. Divested of it, he appears almost as *unnatural* as the poor fowl stripped of its feathers to represent him.

There is another subject connected with this, on which I shall only make a passing remark. In the somewhat acrimonious controversies on the subject of beauty, stirred up by Burke's Essay, much stress was laid by some writers, and in a very offensive manner, on the instinct which attracts sex to sex. Some of Burke's sensuous illustrations not unnaturally led to this. This natural instinct has essentially nothing to do with beauty; though since the dominion of knowledge, it is greatly though capriciously affected by it. A person is attractive because beautiful, not beautiful because attractive. I shall now say no more on the subject; in the Appendix on Morals I shall be obliged to approach it more closely. I have no more to say of the natural beauty of the animal man. As already stated, I do not place it very high in the scale. More perfect organization does not necessarily argue beauty. The ape, I suppose, stands next to man in this respect; but its beauty is not much appreciated. Divested of reason, fallen man in a state of nature would be what Homer's Jupiter pronounces him, "The most wretched of all things that breathe

and crawl on the earth," (*Iliad* xvii., 5.) and his appearance would correspond with his estate : by its aid he has dominion over all other creatures, in power as in beauty ; the highest exponents of which are intellectual, moral, and spiritual expression.

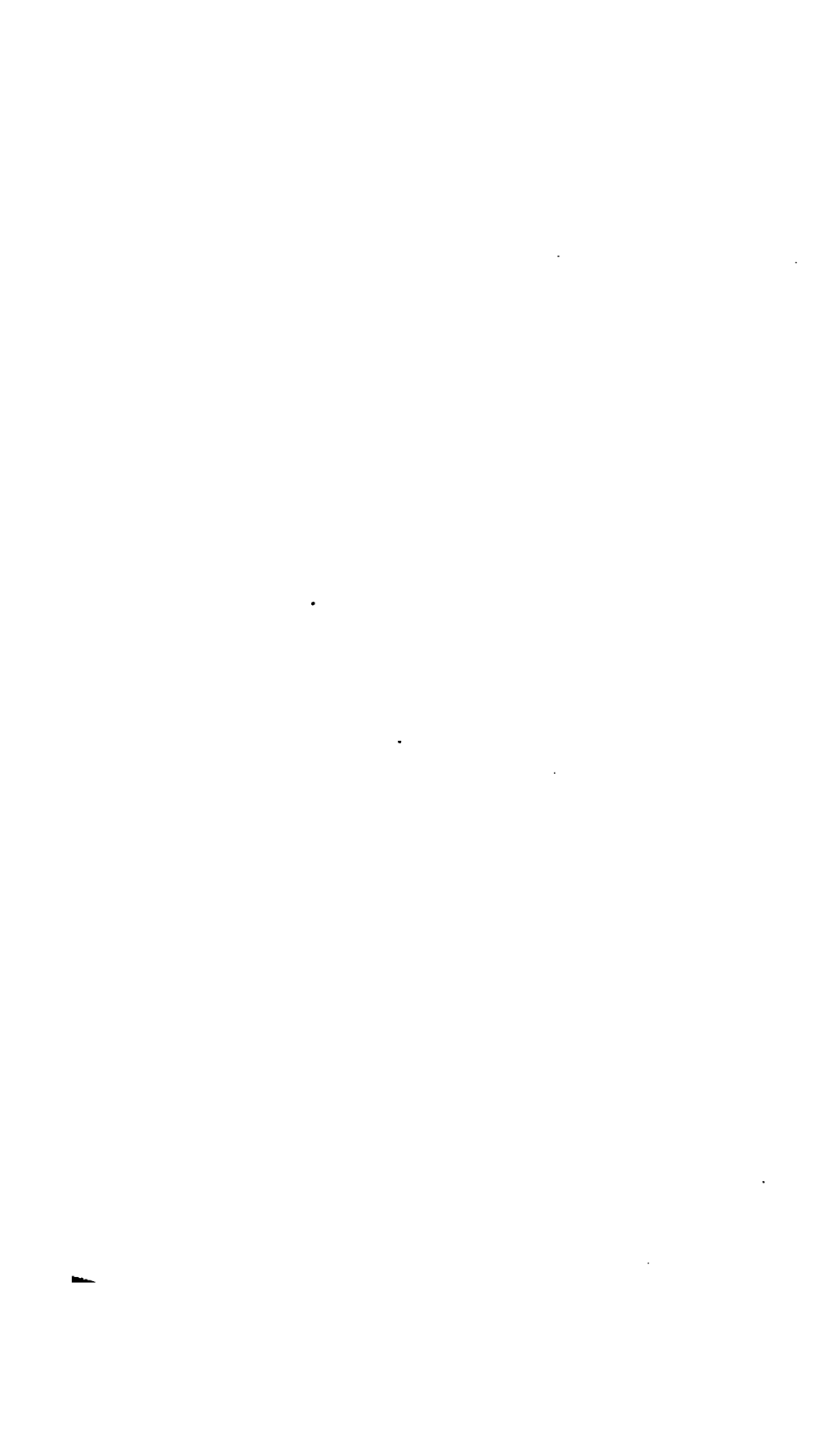
I have already shewn that in essence this beauty is composed of the same elements as all visible beauty ; their reflection in expression I must leave to poets and painters to delineate. It would be impossible accurately to distinguish between intelligence, virtue, and devotion in expression. The good is the beautiful : that which proceedeth of love. I must, however, recur for a moment to a passage already partially quoted from Mr. Leslie's *Handbook*, on spiritual beauty. An inference seems to be drawn that spiritual beauty is chiefly displayed in disease, suffering, and old age. This appears at first sight opposed to the position, which I think is indisputable, that beauty in man must be most perfect when his form and faculties are in the highest state of development. I have already hinted that the brilliancy of the eyes, the refining of the features and heightening of colour in disease, are but the redeeming beauty of the changing leaf. The beauty of expression, under different circumstances, at different periods of life, does not admit of comparison. There may be as much spiritual expression in the countenance of a dying child as in that of an aged Christian ; but the two should not be compared. The most powerful expression of virtuous emotion or passion must be called forth by the trials and vicissitudes of life ; but the most perfect exhibition of spiritual

beauty we must endeavour to conceive, though we cannot realise it, as freed from these traces of fallen nature. "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace," beyond and above "long-suffering;" and the virtues of our warfare, and their perfectly reflected image or expression—light, life, and harmony.

I hope I have not been wholly unsuccessful in establishing the proposition with which I set out at the commencement of this Essay: that there are certain principles or elements of natural and visible beauty—that there is positive beauty in nature, which may be "sought out of all them that have pleasure therein," without long training in science or art, and which such will not be persuaded has no existence but in the mind or fancy of the beholder. I trust, too, that I have shewn such a coincidence as cannot be accidental, between natural visible beauty and that moral and spiritual excellence in which the Creator formed at the first, and to which He has declared it is His purpose to restore mankind, that, to use the words of the apostle, "the invisible things of Him, even His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (Romans i. 20.)



NOTES  
TO THE FIRST ESSAY.



## NOTES

### TO THE FIRST ESSAY.

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NOTE <sup>a</sup>, page 5.—It will be objected that I have chosen a very unfortunate authority in Dr. Middleton, inasmuch as his latitudinarian opinions were very generally condemned by contemporary divines, and he narrowly escaped expulsion from the Church. A glance, however, at the controversies of his time will shew that his opinions concerning the fall of man might have escaped with comparatively little censure, had he not broached others which were held to be more dangerous. He had, moreover, made many enemies by the bold stand he made against Bentley and the High Church party at Cambridge. The odium which he incurred chiefly arose from his attack upon patristic theology. The position he maintained was, that if the genuineness of the miracles and supernatural legends of the Fathers were allowed, no stand could be made against the miracles of the Church of Rome, as no line could be drawn between them. His arguments appeared so conclusive to Gibbon the historian, then a very young man, that, sooner than give up the Fathers, he for a short time embraced Romanism. An attempt to establish the paramount authority of the early church, has led to similar results in our own time—numerous conversions to Rome.

NOTE <sup>b</sup>, page 6.—There was a time, however, when fearful heresy arose in the opposite direction. The Ophites, an early sect, calling themselves Christians, are said to have worshipped the serpent, as being the author of knowledge.

NOTE <sup>c</sup>, page 15.—There is a passage in Mr. Payne Knight's *Principles of Taste* which forcibly demonstrates how much we owe to the teaching of our stern stepmother Necessity:—"A state of abstract perfection would, according to our present weak and inadequate notions of things, be a state of perfect misery; as it would necessarily preclude almost every mental exercise and intellectual gratifi-

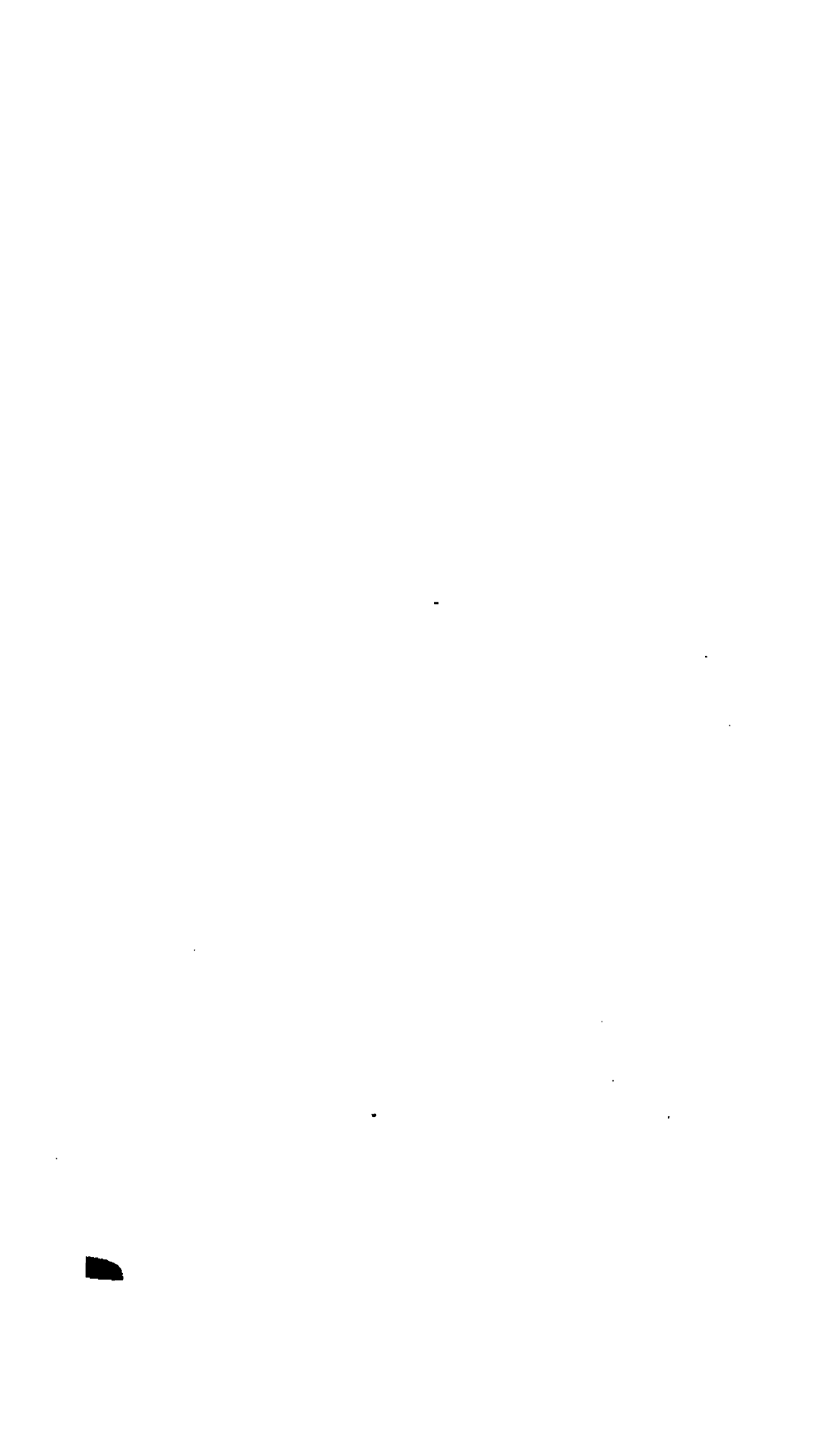


cation, from which our happiness here arises. If everything were known, there would be nothing to be learned; if every good were possessed, there would be none to be acquired; and if none were wanting, or *there were no evil*, there would be none to be done; and consequently all would be dead inaction, or action without motive or effect. So absurd and presumptuous is it in us to attempt to form any idea of the beatitudes of superior beings, whose faculties and modes of intelligence have perhaps nothing in common with our own." (Part iii., c. 3, s. 40.)

NOTE <sup>d</sup>, page 29.—There can, however, be no doubt that many Christians, and Christian systems, have subscribed to this notion in its literal sense, directly opposed as it appears to revelation. Origen, and all Christian Platonists down to Sir Thomas Browne, held it, and Wordsworth in our own time. His ode, *Intimations of Immortality* from recollections of early childhood, allows of no other interpretation; indeed, his ardent admirer, Mr. Keble, admits this, though he adds, almost in the words of Schlegel, "*Quamvis autem hanc opinionem vix ferat divinæ philosophiæ ratio.*" (*Praelect. Acad.* 39, p. 789.) To me, the idea that "our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting," and that we come from a higher state "trailing clouds of glory" into this world of sin and suffering, appears utterly subversive of all that we are taught in Scripture of our creation and redemption. The same sentiments are, however, repeated in the *Prelude*: "I know not what this tells of being past," &c.

NOTE <sup>e</sup>, page 31.—If Aristotle has anywhere investigated the principles of visible beauty, I should much like to see his remarks, being convinced that they would not be far wrong. I have never met with them; but Mr. Ruskin, in his *Two Paths*, tells us that they may be found in the *Builder* newspaper, and that his principles of beauty are: order, symmetry, and the definite. With his usual respect for world-honoured names, he at once proceeds to turn them into ridicule. He draws a square with a hard line to represent the *definite*: this he subdivides into a great number of smaller squares in regular *order*, and in each square he puts a grotesque indication of an imp, or mannikin, with an arm and leg extended on each side at the same angle, to convey *his* ideas of *symmetry*; and we have at once Aristotle's principles of beauty. Now I believe the passage alluded to in the *Builder* is in the *Poetics*, and, of course, does not directly refer to visible beauty. Aristotle is treating of the composition of a poem or drama. The fable or plot, he says, must be entire or definite; and it must be extended so as to consist of parts—a beginning, a middle, and an end, all three mutually related to, or in proportion to each other; for "the beautiful is in magnitude and order." An animal or other object consisting of parts, must not be so small that we cannot distinguish the parts, nor so large that we cannot take in the whole at once, or we cannot pronounce it beautiful. Entirety, order, and proportion or symmetry, are all named; but what is chiefly insisted upon is, that the length of a poem should be in proportion to the matter, keeping in view the order and sub-

ordination of parts. Mr. Ruskin should be the last man to indulge in such a style of criticism, being himself particularly sensitive when what he conceives to be illogical deductions are made from his own writings; and that such are made he attributes to the bad logic engendered by the study of Aristotle. In a letter published in the *Art Journal*, August, 1858, in defence of my late friend Constable against some unjust and ungenerous depreciation of his art by Mr. Ruskin, I have endeavoured to shew that he understood Constable no better than he did Aristotle. Mr. Dallas, in his *Poetics*, makes Aristotle's definition of pleasure the starting point from which he declares his fanciful theory, that the Poetic is the unconscious emotion of the soul. He makes Aristotle say, "Pleasure is a motion of the soul while it is still." This Hibernicism he adopts to make the definition harmonize with his notion that all pleasure is unconscious, in the teeth of the word "perceptible" (αἰσθητή). The fact is that, like many others who misunderstand Aristotle, he makes happiness and pleasure synonymous. Coleridge (*Aids to Reflection*) says, "Happiness (εὐτυχία) is the amount of pleasure that happens to a man." Aristotle makes pleasure a transient emotion, no necessary ingredient in happiness (εὐδαιμονία) which is the habit of the soul. There could not well be stronger presumptive evidence that the latter is right in his ideas, than that, whilst Coleridge considers that he goes too far in asserting that happiness consists in the practice of virtue, Archbishop Leighton contends that he degrades happiness in making it dependent on outward circumstances. Aristotle only demands for happiness a sufficiency of the good things of life; and, of course, he who makes the smallest amount sufficient will stand the best chance of being happy. To say that a man can be happy under the sufferings of Job is stoicism to which he makes no pretence. Sir Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, attacks him from an opposite quarter—that he does not make health a pleasure; which he contends is the "greatest of bodily pleasures;" as though a man in perfect bodily health could not be miserable. This objection very forcibly illustrates Aristotle's meaning. He makes happiness the health, as it were, of the soul—an indwelling, abiding, unconscious habit, like the health of the body. Nothing can impair this habitual condition of the soul but sin; but body and soul so act upon each other, that the health and ease of the former are, to some extent, necessary to happiness: for "the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things." (Wisdom.) Perhaps happiness is not quite a correct translation of Aristotle's εὐδαιμονία, εὐτυχία or good hap comes nearer to our word. Leighton says, we must be conscious of happiness—have the "very relishing and tasting of its sweetness," which is pleasure, τὸ ᾗδν. Εὐδαιμονία means rather blessedness, or being in favour with the gods. This Aristotle accords, not to the man who has most pleasure, but to the perfect man—the man who does right under all circumstances; and I have little doubt that St. Paul, who was well skilled in Grecian philosophy, had its precepts before him, when he said that the end of the teaching of scripture was also, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."



APPENDIX.

ON CRIME AND MORALS.



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HAVING attempted in the preceding Essay to shew that the great object of Divine economy in creation and redemption is to promote moral and spiritual beauty, and that this one object is as evidently demonstrated in the works, as it is taught in the word of God; I propose now to follow this up by a brief review of some particulars of the past and present aspects of such beauty, or rather of its opposite, the deformity of sin. My first duty is to make my apology for rejecting the popular opinion, that sin was brought into the world by the machinations of Satan or the devil. In doing this I know I must give offence to many; but the question is so important—has such a direct bearing on the subject of beauty, and on moral teaching, that I cannot be withheld by private considerations from expressing my convictions.

The fall of man, so called, after the brief exposition of Moses, is scarcely alluded to again directly in the Old Testament. The only instance that I am aware of is in the book of Job, where the sin of Adam is spoken of as “hiding iniquity in his bosom:” even this may refer to the general sin of Adam or man. I know not where our Saviour speaks of it at all: indeed I believe the only writer in the New Testament who does is St. Paul; and though he undoubtedly takes it as a literal narrative of facts, he never attributes the fall of man to Satan or the devil. He says to the Corinthians, “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” The only connection between the serpent and Satan, are one or two passages in Revelation where

Satan is called "that old serpent." My own conviction is that the identification of the serpent tempter and Satan dates after the time of the Apostles. According to Cruden and others, there was a very prevalent opinion that the serpent was originally a being of great beauty and intelligence, whose form and habits were debased after his invasion of the innocence of mankind, as indeed, if we take the narrative literally, we are bound to believe. It was not the fall of man by the temptation of Satan, but by "the speaking serpent" that according to Gibbon "was treated with profane derision" by the Gnostic heretics. (*Decline and Fall*, 15.) The teaching of the Bible appears to be rather that Satan was admitted into the world by sin, than sin by Satan.

But beyond this I feel bound in honesty to declare, that I find no sufficient authority in Scripture on which to support the system so long and generally maintained by Christians, of temptation by spiritual adversaries—real not ideal personages, a devil or devils. That the writers of the New Testament held such belief I do not question; and if they are to be considered infallible, there is an end of the matter: but we are taught in this book that it was written by men of like passions or infirmities with ourselves; and I believe that they would have disclaimed the ascription of infallibility as earnestly as did St. Paul the proffered incense at Lystra. Where the latter says, "Though I have the gift of prophecy to understand all mysteries and all knowledge," he seems to be speaking of something which he held to be as much above his powers, as when he continues, "Though I could speak with the tongue of angels." Are we bound to believe that had he given an exposition of the Mosaic history of the creation he would have made it conform with the discoveries of modern science? If I am right in supposing that the apostles and evangelists did not identify the serpent with Satan, nearly the whole of Christendom has since virtually ignored their infallibility as completely as I do now.

What, then, do we learn concerning Satan and his emissaries in the Old Testament? The word devil does not strictly speaking belong to it, being borrowed from idolatrous Greece: those passages in which it is used evidently refer to the gods of the heathen, to worship which the Jews were so often drawn aside. "They sacrificed unto devils, not unto gods; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not." (Deut. xxxii. 17.) It is contended by many commentators that the word Satan or Sathanas, which in the New Testament is the same with the devil, is never used in the Old Testament as a proper name; but means simply an accuser or adversary.

It is unquestionably most frequently so used, and by no means always in a bad sense. The angel who withstood Balaam is called his Satan or adversary. The passage which most obviously presents itself to our notice, as opposed to such an opinion, is in the commencement of the Book of Job. This poem, for such it has often been called, is characterised throughout by the exuberance of Oriental metaphor, and the boldest imagery; and it would be easy to produce instances of poetic license, to which natural history, science, and reality are directly opposed. The description of the council in Heaven I can only regard as a prophetic vision or bold conception of the unknown poet, accounting for the unparalleled trials of a good and virtuous man. To take it as a true history, in which Job is made to undergo such severe afflictions, merely to satisfy his sneering adversary of his integrity, not only requires strong faith, but is I think derogatory to the majesty and justice of God. Even Matthew Henry, as stout a stickler as any for literal interpretation, says that "it does not at all derogate from the credibility of Job's story in general, to allow that this discourse between God and Satan is parabolical," and suggests that the meeting of the sons of God may mean "a meeting of the saints on earth." But even if we take it as a literal narrative, the description of Satan in no way corresponds with the character assigned him in popular theology, as the universal omnipresent and powerful tempter of mankind. He expresses no ill-will towards Job, only suggests doubts of his integrity: Job stood or fell by his own strength or weakness: his trials, except in their intensity, were such as are common unto man, and were inflicted by God's permission. It is true there are passages in the Old Testament in which Satan is represented as the tempter as well as an adversary. Such expressions are common in the language of all nations: a man's being tempted by his evil genius or evil angel, ought to be regarded only as figurative or poetic expressions, if we find no sufficient consistent development to warrant us in receiving them as revelation. I can gather nothing more substantial than such passages as I have alluded to, on which to build a theory of an evil spirit or spirits from the Old Testament. As already stated, the word Satan is most frequently used in passages which can have no reference to spiritual agency.

When we come to the New Testament, the Greek words translated devils and spirits are most frequently used. Both these words being in the neuter gender would seem to imply things, not persons; but I must admit that, at the time we are considering, persons were understood. The devil and Satan seem to be synonymous. The belief in



devils in legionary numbers was then universal amongst the Jews: Satan is frequently introduced, even by our Saviour, in his old character of the accuser or adversary; and is said by the writers, but not by Christ, to enter into the heart and tempt men to grievous sin. His emissaries the devils are never represented as tempters, but simply as torturing and afflicting, as far as we can see by the same grievous maladies of body and mind which now afflict mankind. In no one instance is it said that the demoniacs or possessed were more wicked than others, or tempted to sin: in many instances all moral responsibility was removed by the loss of reason.

A nominal distinction is made by the writers between healing and casting out devils; but virtually no difference is established. As a general rule, where both cause and effect were seen, the affection was called disease; where only the effect, the cause being hidden, it was supposed to be possession. We have, therefore, deaf and dumb devils, but not blind or lame; but even this distinction is not kept up. St. Paul calls his "thorn in the flesh," supposed to be amaurosis or partial blindness, frequently alluded to in his writings (Lewin's *Life of St. Paul*), "an angel of Satan." This is not usually considered a case of possession, but in what lies the difference? The expression could not well be stronger. St. Paul acknowledges that his affliction was sent to him for his good; that he had besought the Lord that it might depart from him; and though he had obtained no relief, had been comforted with the assurance that divine grace would enable him to bear it; "therefore," he adds, "I will glory in my infirmities." Either the expression is metaphorical—and if in this case, why not in others?—or Satan is represented as ministering for his good. The only case in which Christ ascribes the maladies He healed to Satan, is one of an infirmity of long standing like St. Paul's. A woman is brought to Him bent down by extreme weakness; He heals her on the Sabbath day, and asks, "Shall not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound these eighteen years, be loosed of her infirmity?" Neither of these cases are ordinarily received as demoniacal; but they are ascribed to the devil: where, then, is the distinction between disease and possession?

Christ, when the Jews said that He cast out devils by Beelzebub, refuted them by logical argument from their own premises; but His words imply no more than that evil cannot be cast out by evil. I know of no single passage in which His teaching concerning evil spirits is not more clear and forcible taken metaphorically than literally. In some

cases, as when He says, "Ye are of your father the devil," "One of you is a devil," &c., His words cannot be taken literally. There are others in which He uses the word Satan not, as it appears to me, in a bad sense. Take two memorable instances, in addressing St. Peter. On our Lord saying that He was going up to Jerusalem to die, Peter earnestly and affectionately remonstrates: "In mercy to thee, O Lord, [*ἄλωσ σοι Κυριε*] this must not be;" Christ replies in language such as a warrior might use going into the battle to certain death, or Regulus to exile and torture:—"Away from me, fond tempter! you do not help me, but only add to the bitterness of my trial." When we remember that Christ Himself prayed that if it were possible the cup might pass from Him, we cannot conceive that the harshness implied by the word in its worst sense, and in commentaries on the passage, was intended. (See Matthew Henry thereon.) The other occasion is when Christ forewarns Peter of his fall. "Satan," He says, "has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." To winnow or sift wheat, is often used in Scripture to represent trial, separating the evil from the good. It is an office which Christ assumes to Himself: "I will thoroughly purge my floor"—winnow the wheat of my threshing floor. Satan, then, is described as desiring to try Peter as he did Job and St. Paul for his ultimate good. Christ continues, "But I have prayed"—for what? not that he might be delivered out of Satan's power; we know that he was tempted and fell, but "that thy faith fail not;" and adds, "When thou art converted [turned wholly unto Me and strengthened by the trial], strengthen thy brethren." To make this a mere outbreak of the malice of an evil being, not sanctioned by God's providence, destroys the force of the whole passage.

But, it will be asked, Does not Christ address these affections and maladies, as you call them, as persons, calling them devils and unclean spirits? Undoubtedly it is so represented. Such impersonation is common in the language of the Bible: on one occasion at least He is said to have addressed disease in the same manner. "He stood over her, and rebuked the fever, and the fever left her." That the other evangelists who record the miracle do not give the expression, only shews that we cannot depend upon verbal accuracy. Had Peter's mother-in-law uttered incoherent ravings in the delirium of her fever, she would most probably have been described as a demoniac.

Again, it will be urged that if this belief in devils was a popular superstition, Jesus would have refuted it. The objection is only negative: He may have, though we are not told that He did; for we are told that the

record preserved of all things that He did and said is very fragmentary. (St. John xx. 30 and xxi. 25.) Moreover, men's ears are never so dull of hearing as when what is said clashes with deep-rooted prejudices. Had a miraculous healer appeared in the reign of Elizabeth or the first James, he would have been represented by any four men honest and true, taken from the most educated, not from the unlearned, as having power over witches and familiar spirits; and he must have spoken very plainly indeed to have disabused them of their prejudices. But I say that Christ does on one occasion at least intimate to His disciples that their ideas on this subject were erroneous, and exhorts them to a better spirit. When the seventy returned to Him saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name" (on which Matthew Henry remarks, "Though the healing of the sick only was mentioned in their instructions, yet no doubt casting out devils was in their commission"), our Saviour replies, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." I do not pretend to determine the exact meaning of the words: it was probably prospective. He illustrates His second advent by the same simile: both may refer to the same period, the dawn of a brighter day. "Behold," He continues, "I give you power to walk on scorpions and serpents, and on all the power of the enemy"—making scorpions and serpents as much the power of the enemy as devils—"and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding," He adds emphatically, "in this rejoice not, that the devils are made subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." The correction may have been more explicit than they received it; but take it as it is, surely disapprobation is expressed. But what I most rely upon is that the whole teaching of our Lord, taking it in the spirit, not in the letter, is opposed to the idea of temptations and assaults from without. Again and again He says that all sin comes from within, from the heart. "Do ye not perceive, that *whatsoever thing* from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him? That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of man proceed *evil thoughts*, adulteries, fornications, murders." He tells us to "love and bless our enemies, and *all* who despitefully use us and persecute us." This, it will be said, can only apply to our brethren; but He makes no reservation; and I do think, that if we are constantly assailed from without by enemies so powerful, who are ever suggesting evil thoughts and sin, He would expressly and constantly have taught us to pray that their malice might be restrained, and not simply, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." That the apostles taught us to do so

I admit, and I know that I shall be accused of great presumption in suggesting that they may have been in error; but when we find that they differed and condemned each other on points of discipline and doctrine, I see not how we can avoid the conclusion that one or other must have been in error, or—which I will not suppose—dishonest.

Our Lord, when accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub, uttered a parable illustrating the operation of spiritual influence, which I think is utterly irreconcilable with the idea of its personality apart from man. "When the [not *an*, but *the*] unclean spirit goeth out of a man, he walketh [more correctly *it walketh*] through dry places seeking rest, and finding none, it saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when it cometh, it findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth it and taketh to itself seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Does not this graphically describe the state or spirit of a man who has overcome some besetting sin; but his heart not being converted to God, but empty, finds no rest till he returns to it? Take it to describe a discomfited being driven out from the man, and you give to what little force is left almost a comic effect; but take it as the spirit of the man under two aspects, as indulged in sin, and then under galling restraint, longing not only for this, but seven other worse sins, and all is clear and instructive. The whole tenor of Christ's teaching is that "false teachers" and our own hearts are our worst enemies.

It is impossible in such an enquiry as this to pass by the temptation of Christ in the wilderness: my remarks will, however, be very few. The impression that it cannot be taken as a literal narrative of facts, is, I think, very general: no explanation of it as such can make it even possible in conception. That the Holy One, very God as well as very man, could be borne about bodily by a created being; offered all the kingdoms of the world which Himself had made, to induce Him to rebel against Himself; not to mention the fabulous mountain from whence they could be seen, is, I say, simply impossible to conceive. Had the first narrator received it from the lips of Christ Himself, he was bound to say so; no less authority could warrant the publishing of it as matter of fact: but view it as a parable or allegorical conception of temptations which might assail the Son of God in the flesh, alone in the wilderness and worn with fasting, to decline the conflict and to resume His state and glory, and it is consistent and impressive. Would St. Mark, had he regarded the details of the temptation, as described

by the other Evangelists, in the light of naked facts, have simply recorded that Christ was forty days in the wilderness tempted of Satan, among wild beasts, which Christ calls of the power of Satan? Compared as matters of fact, the accounts do not agree.

It is useless to multiply quotations. I know of no difficulties in my way more formidable than those I have touched upon. Such expressions as "fire prepared for the devil and his angels," I, of course, regard as metaphors: few can take them literally. More commonly the phrase is "a furnace of fire;" implying a process of purification. It is said indeed, "The worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," but it is not said that the worm may not be eventually redeemed, though it may be after being purified seven times in the furnace. I pass on to the question, very important if the doctrine is true,—What is Satan? This question it has never been attempted to answer; all that can be said is, We know not, and it would be idle to speculate. But surely we should be able to form some conception of that which we are bound to believe; and yet I know not a single attribute or quality of Satan uniformly maintained, which is not directly opposed to other conceptions of him. The most common theory is that he is a fallen angel; but an acute and learned commentator, Dr. Maitland, than whom there is no stronger advocate of diabolical agency, witchcraft, &c., and who characterises any doubt of either as a proof of the infidelity of the age, says in his *Eruvin*, "Satan may have been originally an angel or archangel, or any other being whom commentators, or poets, or other writers of fiction may suppose, yet I find no ground whatever in *Scripture* for believing anything of the sort." Milton's description of Satan's being cast out of heaven, he says, "comes very near to blasphemy and nonsense." I fear that the same verdict may be passed on a great deal else that has been written on the subject. As the casting Satan and his angels out of heaven in the Revelation refers to the future, Dr. Maitland shows, and I think very convincingly, that the idea of fallen angels is derived from the second Epistle of Peter, and that of St. Jude, where "the angels who kept not their first estate" are spoken of, and which evidently refers to "the sons of God" spoken of in the sixth chapter of Genesis. As I shall have to consider this passage hereafter, I must defer till then all comment on his arguments. Though Dr. Maitland tells us that there is no authority in Scripture for calling Satan an angel, he gives us no assistance as to what we are to call him. He gives us, indeed, two or three titles, to shew his power in this world, none of which it appears to me pos-

sible to understand otherwise than as metaphors. Take the first, "The god of this world." Are there two Gods of this world? Or can Satan be called a god in any other sense than the god of the wicked, as gluttony and covetousness are idolatry? The other titles given are of very doubtful application. But allow him to possess all the power and intelligence which such titles imply, it only increases our perplexity: we are more at a loss to understand how such a being could have become so wicked and malignant. He admits that he must be a created being; but should it be urged "that we cannot conceive that God would create anything that was not originally good," he replies, "The reader may, perhaps, know more about this than I do: the question is too deep for me." We can expect, therefore, no assistance from Dr. Maitland, as to the nature of Satan. He tells us only that we must receive all that is told us of him in Scripture with unquestioning faith: attempting to reconcile things which seem to be impossible, has led, he imagines, to something very "near to blasphemy and nonsense." I shall endeavour to shew that clinging to the letter and not to the spirit leads to much the same result.

I know that we must and do believe much that we do not understand; but it is one thing to believe that which is incomprehensible, another, that which reason tells us is impossible. I know nothing in the creeds or articles of our church which is contrary to reason; but is it not so, to conceive a being whom modern theology invests with the attributes of God—omnipresence, which involves omniscience, and who yet cannot see the folly of fighting against God; who is constantly tempting all men, the just most especially, and who yet could not touch Job without God's permission; who cannot harm men if they trust in God, and who yet could "tempt the Lord his God" to fall down and worship him?

Dr. Bushnell, an American divine, in his work, *Nature and the Supernatural* (the most able defence I have seen of Scripture, against the neology and rationalism of the age; in which he proves to conviction the truth of the Bible by its intrinsic evidence, without demanding, but without questioning the infallible inspiration of its authors), says, "That there are bad spirits there is no more reason to doubt, than that there are bad men (who are indeed bad spirits), and as little that the bad spirits are spirits of mischief, and will act in character according to their opportunities;" and yet argues that "Satan or the devil, taken in the singular, is not the name of any particular person, neither is it a personation merely of temptation or impersonal

evil, as many insist, for there is really no such thing as impersonal evil in the sense of moral evil; but the name is a name that generalizes bad persons or spirits, with their bad thoughts and characters, many in one. That there is any single one of them, who, by distinction or preëminence is called Satan or devil, is wholly improbable. And a little farther on,—“ Evil is a hell of oppositions, riots, usurpations, in itself, and bears a front of organisation only as against good. It never made a chief that it would not shortly dethrone; never set up any royal Nimrod, or family of Nimrods, it would not some time betray or expel. That the organic force of evil, therefore, has ever settled the eternal supremacy of some one spirit called devil or Satan, is against the known nature of evil.” As I do not maintain the impersonality of moral evil, but always attach it to the heart of man, I do not see that there is so far much difference of opinion between us; but I imagine that he believes, though he does not assume it to be proved, that there are other persons than man who are ministers of it.

On the subject of the origin of evil, Dr. Bushnell confessedly approaches very near to what has always been esteemed dangerous heresy. “ At just this point,” he says, “ we are able, it may be, to form some just or not impossible conception of the diabolical personality. According to the Manichees, or disciples of Zoroaster—a doctrine virtually accepted by many philosophers, two principles have existed together from eternity; one of which is the cause of good, and the other of evil. With sufficient modifications, their account is probably true.” Into these modifications, by which he endeavours to reconcile this admission with revelation, I need not enter. If the presumptuous question must be raised, according to my theory it would be, not, Why is evil in the world? but, Why did not God at once make all things perfect—reptiles, and beasts, and men, all as perfect as Himself? Imperfection must produce evil—is in itself comparatively evil; but “ the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men,” and has purposes to achieve above what man in his ideas of perfection dreams of. It surely does not render the problem easier, to have to account not only for evil, but for evil beings, essentially, hopelessly evil; neither do I conceive that belief in such beings can have anything to do with faith. “ Faith is the substance of *things hoped for*,” not of things abhorred.

I have not sought this subject: I could not avoid it. If sin comes from above, or from without, I am wrong in saying that it comes from within—from the knowledge of good and evil; and visible

beauty in creation loses to me its significance and importance. I have read nothing on the subject but an article in the *Penny Cyclopædia* (Devil), from which I see that the doctrine of personal evil has been assailed by many writers in England and on the continent at various periods since the dark ages, by several clergymen, as I suppose, of our own church. I can only wonder that it did not go out with witchcraft, to deny the reality of which John Wesley thought, and Dr. Maitland still thinks, is to deny the truth of the Bible. The latter thinks "a spirit of general incredulity," the most prominent characteristic of the present age, "as opposed to a simple and credulous belief on all subjects—a disposition which, until it has passed a certain line, is absolutely necessary; but which, when it passes that line, and becomes the habitual and predominant feeling, is in some cases a worse evil than those which it prevents." I do not wish to dispute the truth of this latter proposition, though I have been taught to regard faith as a sort of happy mean between infidelity on the one side, and credulity and superstition on the other; but I must say that I see very little evidence that incredulity on all subjects is a characteristic of our time. When I regard the late humiliating outbreaks of table-turning, spirit-rapping, clairvoyance, &c.; when we turn to religion, and consider the progress of Irvingism and Mormonism (I draw no parallel between the two: there can be little in common between fanatical imposture and religious enthusiasm however misdirected); the rapid development of the former, and, to the disgrace of the age, the still increasing numbers of the latter—I can see, I repeat, little evidence that the element of credulity is deficient in the popular mind of either the old world or the new.

The most distressing feature of this reappearance of magical pretensions in our own country, has been, that clergymen of the church have deliberately published their opinions that it is to be ascribed to diabolical agency: not hesitating to confess that they had exorcised bewitched tables, and extorted answers from them respecting the secrets of darkness. When we have such blind leaders of the blind, what marvel that both fall into the foul ditch together! It does not come within my subject to enquire whether, setting aside the Scriptural evidence of diabolical agency, there is not historical evidence. It has been said that Egyptian sorcery, Delphic oracles, fortune-telling, witchcraft, &c., rest on as good authority as any facts of history. This, if admitted, is not very conclusive: facts that are held true in one age are proved false in another; nay, how difficult is it to ascertain the real



truth of what is passing almost before our eyes. But admitting for the sake of argument that there may be such things, what good can come of meddling? Let them be consigned, whether true or false, by the general verdict of good men, to gross and revolting superstition. Neither do I question that there are many hidden things in nature, many more than man will ever discover. Let such be approached freely, but let it be in a philosophic and scientific spirit, not held up to the gaze of the vulgar with the mummery and appliances of charlatanism.

I have expressed myself strongly on this point, because I feel strongly. As long as religion teaches men to believe in things incredible, credulity must be her handmaid, and superstition will not be far to seek. Take as an instance, an earnest and religious mind, in which credulity predominated to an excess which would now seem almost impossible. Sir Thomas Browne, the learned and accomplished author of *Religio Medici*, says, "Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith." And again, "This, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe things not only above, but contrary to reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses." To what did his faith, as he calls it, lead him? Did it preserve him from heretical opinions? He avowed his faith in the ideal doctrines of Plato, that there is no reality in the things we see, only a reflected appearance. He went beyond Plato in holding the preëxistence of the soul to its union with the body. Plato taught that before the union it was part of the Deity: he gave it an individual existence. However it may be attempted, I can see no way of reconciling these opinions with the revelation that God created man out of the dust, and that he became a living soul. As to the revolting superstitions into which his credulity betrayed him, I will only mention that he believed that foul unnatural intercourse between devils and mankind was of not unfrequent occurrence. Mr. Kingsley, in his third lecture on *Alexandria and her Schools*, says, "the school from which the *Religio Medici* issued was not likely to make any bad man good, or any foolish man wise."

And yet the faith of Sir Thomas Browne (as I learn from a magazine) is called up by Mr. Howitt in his work on Spiritualism, recently published, to shame the incredulity of the present age. An unblushing attempt is also made in this book, and by the party generally, to denounce all unbelievers in modern spiritualism as materialists and Sadducees. Few will feel much alarm on this score, with the fact before them that the leaders of this movement have been avowed sceptics. Dr. Bushnell describes the spiritualists themselves, as "our modern

Sadducees, who systematically reject the faith of anything supernatural," and exposes the inconsistency of their present pretensions with their known sentiments. What they mean by materialism I have not seen stated, but suspect that they hold with Bishop Berkeley that there is no such thing as matter. At all events these spirits offer as convincing proofs of their being material as did the floor to the honest stamp of old Dr. Johnson. They shake hands and kiss, like beings of flesh and blood. In *A Strange Story* too, a sceptical materialist is reclaimed by the rather odd process of being made to see the soul, like a spark. The probable effect of this modern magic upon morality may be inferred from the moral of this very strange story, in which a man, or something in the form of man, the paramour of a sorceress, and a murderer, represented as a most fascinating personage, is on the point of overruling all the laws of God and nature, and rendering himself immortal, and is only prevented by a happy combination of circumstances. Mr. Howitt's argument that general belief in a thing proves its reality, might have been adduced by the mass of mankind, for by far the greater portion of the world's past duration, to prove the truth of Polytheism; in which, indeed, these lying wonders have their origin. Mr. Kingsley, in his *Alexandria and her Schools*, shews that the "Mesmerism" and "Spiritual Materialism" of our day had their prototypes amongst the Neoplatonists; and that these epidemic diseases of the imagination have appeared periodically in all ages, and are to be attributed to the same causes—a perverted exaltation of the intellectual above the moral, and a searching after something "above nature, something above that which satisfies the common herd of Christians, righteousness and love, and peace in a Holy Spirit, that is, in the likeness of God." (Sect. iii.)

If it be only possible that the minds of Christians may have been "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ," and that this corruption may be traced to a tinge of superstition reaching up to Apostolic times, derived in the first instance from heathen idolatry, my readers may well bear with me, in thus attempting to clear away the mists of error. St. Paul declares, that "the Spirit speaketh expressly"—and as commentators do not refer this to any passage of Scripture, we may believe that it was revealed to him by the teaching of Christ, or by the spirit of Christ which was in him—"that in the latter times [*ὑστεροῖς* times to come] some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing [*πλανοῖς* erring] spirits, and doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats . . . . profane and

old wives' fables." These times may not have been far distant then, and there seems little encouragement for hope that they are now drawing to a close.

Discarding, then, the epithet "original" as irrelevant, I hold the substance of the Article of our Church, that "sin is the fault and corruption of man's nature, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness," more literally than those who attribute it to a source external to himself. I now proceed to trace summarily the progress of sin—man's departure from original righteousness, the image in which he was created. If we read the three next chapters of Genesis with the same latitude of interpretation which I have already applied to the three preceding, we may trace in their symbolic and somewhat enigmatical language, the only rational and consistent account ever given of man's state and position in this world; nor ought it to excite surprise that in this grand apocalypse of the past with which the sacred volume opens, type and parable should be as freely used as in the Revelation of the future with which it closes. My best apology, however, for receiving these chapters as revelation and not history, is that already pleaded for my figurative interpretation of the fall of man; namely, that no commentators, taking them as a literal narrative, have succeeded in making them consistent, though taking much greater liberties with the text than I do.

I intend to bring under review only a very few verses: these, however, contain all that is revealed of the rise and progress of those crimes which brought on the deluge—crimes which still prevail scarcely less flagrantly, and which, unless arrested by divine mercy, threaten again to involve the human race in another general overthrow. My first assumption is, that it is not intended in this revelation to observe a consecutive order of time. When we consider that thousands of years are comprised in a few verses, and that prophecies are uttered extending through all time to the present, chronological arrangement is not to be expected.

Thus the first effect—the *natural* effect of crime, so to speak, exhibiting itself in man before his sentence is pronounced, gives the picture of sinful man in all periods of his history, vainly endeavouring to hide himself from the presence of his God. He hears the voice of God calling to him in every whispering wind ("in the wind of the day," *margin*) saying, Where art thou? and he knows that he is naked. The clothing of the body, first with leaves, and afterwards with the skins of beasts, evidently refers to two distinct periods probably far asunder.

Having already stated what I understand by the sentence pronounced on sin, and its effect on man's condition in the world, I pass at once to the two great crimes of antediluvian history, murder and adultery. They are, in fact, the culminating points to which all crime tends. Mortify the evil passions which lead up to these, and the obstacles which oppose the striving of the Spirit within us would be removed, and the reign of love restored. In order to understand the history of the Bible, especially its early history, it is necessary to bear in mind, that the word Adam means man or woman—one of the species; and I think we are warranted in supposing that a long period from creation preceded the birth of Cain, the first man to whom a proper name is given. It must have taken a very long time to develop articulate language; and it is evident that at the date of the first murder the earth was extensively peopled: mankind were divided into two tribes, one agricultural, the other pastoral; and immediately after the murder Cain is described as migrating with a sufficient number of followers to build a city.

That God blessed the flocks of Abel more abundantly than his own fields seems to have excited Cain's jealousy and envy. I cannot regard what it is recorded God *said* here, and on other occasions, in any other light than as that which He declares or makes known in the operations of His providence, or by His Spirit to the heart of man. Our Saviour, referring to the account of the first marriage, quotes it as *God said*, "Therefore shall a man leave, &c.," though in the text it is "Adam, or man said." The remonstrance, therefore, with Cain before the murder, the conviction forced upon him of his guilt, and his cry of despair afterwards, may be regarded as the workings of his own conscience, or rather as describing the progress of temptation, guilt, and remorse in mankind, by a single example. A voice within pleads, "If thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted? God will bless thee also: give thy brother thy love, and he will return it; by this mayst thou prevail with him, not by violence." But sin was at the door, and admitted.

Again, I take the curse and the cry of despair of Cain as describing the misery of mankind in general under the curse of blood. How henceforth is he to endure his lot, driven out from the presence of God, a fugitive and a vagabond, seeing a murderer in every one he meets? On this follows a declaration, of which taking it literally, according to our translation, it seems impossible to discover the meaning. "Who-soever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold;" and a mark is set on him, "lest any finding him should slay him." Why

should the life of the murderer be so specially protected?—the law, that “by man shall his blood be shed” be annulled? The only shadow of a solution of this difficulty given, is, that as his punishment was to be a fugitive and vagabond, this punishment was not to be cut short by death; but death was the terror that haunted him: “Every one that findeth me shall kill me:” and from this he is relieved. The translation, it appears, is not very close: more literally it is, “I give a sign to Cain,” not “set a mark” on him. It is a declaration that God in the moral government of man, makes sevenfold retribution fall on murder: remorse and guilt, terror and insecurity will so haunt the murderer that the very love of self will hold his hand.

It is unnecessary to enlarge on the crime of murder. Its hatefulness is fully acknowledged; but it may well cause surprise and deep humiliation, that during more than eighteen centuries that the gospel of peace has been proclaimed, blood has flowed as copiously, or more so than it did in the darkness of heathenism. It will be said that the gospel has not been received; but it has been professed through the greater part of the civilised world: and if we ask whether the doctrines of the Prince of Peace have spread as we might have expected amongst His professed followers, few will, I think, venture an answer in the affirmative. Have not, then, these doctrines been fully preached, or what causes have opposed their progress?

I do not hesitate to say that the one grand obstacle to the spread of Christian principles has been defect of knowledge. Frederick von Schlegel, in the introduction to his *Philosophy of History*, says, “The most important subject, and the first problem of philosophy, is the restoration in man of the lost image of God, so far as this relates to science.” I do not think there ever has been the time when the solution of this problem has been set forth as the first object of Christian knowledge, or at least recognised by Christian governments as the first object to be promoted. It would occupy too much time, even were I competent to the task, to trace the reasons why churches and states have been too much occupied with other less important matters to apply their energies unitedly and in earnest to the regeneration of mankind. That such a time will come we are encouraged to hope by the many promises which have been given of a much fuller development of moral and spiritual beauty than has yet been exhibited. “The earth shall be full of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.”

The early church was entirely precluded from taking any part in civil polity: it consequently not only did not interest itself with the

public weal, but from a misconception that the end of all existing institutions was immediately at hand, eagerly anticipated the overthrow of its adversaries at the second advent. Before it began to take any part in civil government, it was already torn by heresies and dissensions, debased by superstition, and preached renunciation of the world rather than its regeneration. Long ages of darkness followed: the church was occupied with its own aggrandisement and with contentions with the civil power; and having made the fatal mistake of calling in the sword to enforce religious dogmas and obedience to her authority, she became a fountain of strife and persecution instead of peace and love. Such Christ foretold would be the case, through the hardness and cruelty of men's hearts: "I come not to bring peace but a sword." In the meantime the temporal has gradually gained the ascendancy over the ecclesiastical authority, and the power to persecute is taken from the church; but unhappily her dissensions are in no wise healed, creed clashes with creed and party with party, and the time seems yet distant when she will be in a position to proclaim with effect, *PEACE AND GOOD WILL*, the motto of her standard.

Still, through all this gloom, and in spite of the cruel wars which are even now desolating a great portion of the globe, as regards the crime of murder, I see much more cause for hopefulness than as regards the next we shall have to consider. I think I see evidence that the sevenfold vengeance is producing its effect: warfare is becoming so deadly, that men are beginning not only to know but to feel, that they who live by the sword perish by the sword. Whether this is to be attributed to the spread of the arts and sciences, agriculture and commerce, or whether Christians are beginning to understand better what spirit they are of, I will not pretend to decide; but I do think there are unmistakeable signs to be discerned, that in civilised nations the human heart is becoming less hard and cruel. If we look back on our own history, even within the last century, great changes for the better have taken place: the sword, so long considered indispensable in the equipment of a gentleman, has been laid aside: brutal exhibitions of sword-play, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and prize-fighting, under the pressure of public opinion have been or are being suppressed by the law. But the most hopeful sign of the times is to be found in the discontinuance of duelling, which may now in England be almost regarded as a thing of the past.

In free governments, public opinion generally takes the lead of state policy; and if private quarrels cease to be the cause of bloodshed and

private honour is not found tarnished but brighter by the change, the time must come when public quarrels, resulting in wars of aggression, wars to sustain national honour, will be regarded with the same abhorrence. The Volunteer Rifle movement—this, too, one of public opinion—is a step in the same direction, it brings us nearer the times, however distant it may be, when we are told swords will be turned into ploughshares, and men will not learn war any more. The sword will be sheathed, or only drawn to preserve peace and internal tranquillity.

As to the crime of individual murder—"murder most foul, base, and unnatural"—as all men regard it, we may leave it to be dealt with by the law. Personal security is now, perhaps, greater than it ever has been; and though murders are still in this country of daily occurrence, by far the greater part of them may be referred to lust, intemperance, and unbridled passions, which belong to the other great chapter of crime which it is now my painful task to trace up to its source.

Almost all that is recorded of the antediluvian world, beyond the genealogical descent to Noah, is the natural history (if we may use the expression) of these two crimes—murder and adultery, which produced such an amount of wickedness, that, in the poetical language of the writer, "it repented God that he had made man." The fruit of the tree of knowledge was found to be death: "the thoughts of man's heart were only evil continually." Spiritual life seemed all but extinct; metaphorically speaking, God's purpose seemed thwarted, and, as by an act of repentance or afterthought, the waters of the flood were brought on the earth to purify it. One or two verses do indeed intimate that knowledge had produced other fruit; the useful and even fine arts had to some extent been cultivated, and man had acquired fame and renown, of which all further record has been swept away.

It is usual with commentators on the decalogue to teach that all sinful habits arising from the want of proper control over our appetites and passions—drunkenness, gluttony, sloth, extravagance, &c., are breaches of the seventh commandment. This I think erroneous in principle, and likely to lead to errors in practice. All the commandments, except the tenth, are directed against overt acts, to which penalties were attached by the law. The tenth applies equally to all, intimating what our Saviour more fully taught in the Sermon on the Mount, that overt acts are only evidences of the sin which is in the heart, and must be encountered there. When He connects uncalled-for anger with murder, He does not teach that anger is forbidden by the sixth commandment: it may lead to the breach of the third, fifth, or others, as lust so often does

to murder. The seventh commandment is directed expressly against incontinence between the sexes, and Christ, enlarging upon it, only extends it to lust in the heart. It is wrong, therefore, I think, to place this sin in the same category with habits which are only sins in excess. It is as expressly forbidden as murder.

The fruit of this teaching may be seen in the way in which the world usually speaks of this crime, as though it were a natural appetite which you may moderate but not control. "Men," it is said, "will be men; it is nature, and nature will have its way." But of late, the social evil, as it is called, has assumed such hideous features, that men are beginning to be alarmed, and to ask what more dreadful form it may not assume. If it is nature, nature certainly is not in harmony with God. I shall attempt to prove, therefore, from the earliest records of this crime, that it is not nature, but contrary to nature—contrary to the law of God in nature, as ordained at the first.

It is the popularly received opinion, that the first man and woman brought sin into the world before the birth of children, and that therefore the command to be fruitful and multiply, given at the creation, was only in anticipation of the fall. Gibbon says of the early Church, "It was their favourite opinion, that if Adam had preserved his obedience to his Creator, he would have lived for ever in a state of virgin purity, and that some harmless mode of vegetation might have peopled Paradise with a race of innocent and immortal beings." He then proceeds to the recital of the extravagant and revolting practices to which such an idea of virgin purity naturally led. Understanding as I do, that the fall of man does not refer to any particular period of time, I of course cannot sympathise with such theories; but I think, if we abandon the idea of the recital of facts, for a revelation of states or epochs in man's condition, we may find reason to believe, not only that it is conjugal chastity, not virgin purity, which is enjoined, but that there was a period, probably a long period, during which man remained as first created, male and female, one flesh, with no carnal desire beyond each other. Of this at least we have sure evidence, that the earth was not polluted by adultery till after the date of the crime of murder, when, if the arguments already adduced have any force, it was already extensively peopled. The first passage on which I found this supposition is that which is usually understood to describe the creation of woman. I reject this interpretation, because it is directly at variance with what is elsewhere said on this subject; because, in fact, if such is its import, woman was not created at all: she was as much the offspring of Adam as Cain or Abel. I have



the less scruple in endeavouring to give a metaphorical and rational explanation of this passage, because the derision which the literal reading of it has called forth from the sceptic has always been a stumbling-block in the way of timid faith. According to Gibbon, "the rib of Adam" was one of the things which the Gnostics treated with profane ridicule; and I know of nothing in Scripture which gives the least colour to the blasphemous expression "a manufacturing God," which I have seen applied to the God of Creation, unless it be this passage so taken. It is twice distinctly stated that God created Adam or man male and female; in the latter it is said he called their name Adam—two beings, but one creation; one not perfect without the other. And yet, according to the received interpretation—after the account of the seventh day—after placing man and woman in Eden—after the naming of the animals by man—the history goes back to the sixth day to describe the creation of woman. If we concede all this, we advance not a jot towards reconciling the two conflicting statements, that God created man male and female, and called their name Adam; and that God created the female out of man, and man called her name Woman. It will cease to excite surprise that the subject has been treated with levity, if we read some of the ingenious theories which have been invented to make the narrative consistent.

Cruden, under *Woman*, gives the following explanations, but not his authorities: "Some have thought that Adam was created of both sexes," &c., and that here we have "the formation of the woman in the manner before mentioned. It is therefore affirmed that man was already formed male and female before he was created. Others think that the bodies of Adam and Eve were created even from the sixth day, and joined and fastened together sideways to each other; and that afterwards God sent a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and then separated the woman from him." The comments of Matthew Henry on this passage tempt a smile almost as irresistibly as Cruden's; but ridicule proves nothing one way or the other: I shall therefore content myself with urging only one other objection to the literal sense, but I think it is one which should have great weight. Our Saviour, urging the indissolubility of the union between man and woman in the wedded state, makes no allusion to woman's being made out of man. He simply says, "He who made them at the beginning made them male and female."

To guide us in forming an opinion as to what this difficult passage may mean, abandoning the literal interpretation, we should take into consideration the circumstances connected with it. Man was given

dominion over the animal creation; and it is when painting an ideal picture of him, giving names to the animals, which probably existed in great numbers before he was created, that it is recorded, "God said, It is not good for man [male and female] to be alone; I will make for him help as before him" (see margin); or, as the Septuagint gives it, "a helper," *Βοηθον κατ' αυτον*; and where the words next occur, *Βοηθος ομοιος αυτω* "a helper like unto himself," in the masculine gender. Now, what helper naturally presents itself as that required? Obviously, "the arrows in the hands of the giant;" and I have no doubt that here is described the conception and birth of twins. God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam—the sleep in the womb—and of his substance he formed a male, of (or in conjunction with) a female.

Not being able to read Hebrew, my only guide in construing words is Mr. Greenfield's Book of Genesis in Hebrew-English. The word "aisha" here used seems to be compounded of "aish," male, and the particle "a," which changes it into female, because *of the male*. The word means "woman," one of the female sex, or wife; and it would be much more rational to conclude that the birth of a female child is here meant, than to rest satisfied with the popular interpretation: I think, however, that we have evidence to prove that more is intended. Let us go on with the narrative. "And God formed the rib, which he had taken from Adam, into a woman, and brought her unto Adam; and Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: this being shall be called woman, [or female] because taken out\* of the male. Therefore the male shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto the female, and they shall be for flesh one." It is therefore not from the connexion with Adam, but the male, that the name is derived. All the persons adduced—parents and offspring—were alike Adam. By "aisha" I understand the offspring male and female—two persons, but one Adam like the first; the beginning of the word meaning "male," the whole "female," afterwards called Hava, or Eve, the foundation of life. On no other supposition, except by the literal reading, which is only applicable to the first pair, can I make man and wife to be for flesh one.

From the form of woman—from the fact that there is no mention of the birth of a woman, or of a woman, except as a female (that is, of or belonging to a male) till after polygamy was introduced, I conclude

\* Mr. Greenfield gives a vocabulary of indeclinable Hebrew particles, from which I see that the preposition *me* here used has many other meanings besides *out of*, as *on account of*, *concerning*, *in presence of*, *through*, &c., &c.

that for children to be born twins, male and female, husband and wife, was the original law of nature. Cain is spoken of as having a wife, as a matter of course: but no man is spoken of as *taking to himself* a wife before Lamech, and "Lamech took to himself two wives." I have the same horror of what has come to be incest as other men; but, bearing in mind that the first unions must have been between brothers and sisters, it implies a much purer and holier bond, involving more intense affection, to suppose them formed by a natural law, than by selection. When lust entered into the world, it was impossible such unions could continue.

The theory which I have here advanced is, I think, confirmed by the fact that in some of the purer and gentler species of animals the same law of nature has continued to the present time. The two young doves or pigeons of a nest are invariably male and female, invariably pair and remain faithful to each other through life. From the harmony in which large communities of rooks, sea fowl, &c., live together, each pair keeping to its own nest, this law is probably more general than is supposed. In Cowper's beautiful little fable of the doves, there is as much nature as fable.

How long this state of innocence continued we are not told: the sacred narrative proceeds at once to the fall and apostasy of man. In this woman is represented as the temptress, which is the greatest difficulty in understanding the eating of the fruit, as a condition extending through all time, and not a crisis: as, however, it is the wife (not necessarily an individual woman) who eats first, and gives to her husband, it may refer generally to the influence of woman over man; but I think there is too much reason for supposing that it was as being the temptress in departing from the law of nature which bound male and female together as one, that the reproach has fallen upon her. I ground my suspicion upon the curse she brought upon herself—the pains of childbirth, which might have been the natural consequence, on her being brought thereby into the power of man, which would also follow naturally, and because I think I trace in the lament of the first adulterer something like reproach cast upon his wives as the cause of his fall: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech."

However this may be, murder and adultery are represented as the two great sins into which man fell, by eating of the tree of knowledge. The enormity of the latter is shewn by the offender being made to exclaim, "If Cain shall be avenged [or visited with retribution] sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold." The past history of mankind proves

that the prophecy has been amply fulfilled, and is being fulfilled now. The vengeance on murder is recognised at once: in adultery it is not so self-evident, and I fear there is little evidence that it has as yet produced much effect. There is strong presumptive evidence in the order of the Mosaic history that this sin formed an epoch, and effected a great change in the condition of mankind. There follows a very remarkable recapitulation, shewing how man was at first created in *the image of his Maker*, male and female, their name being Adam; then going on to say that Adam begat a son *in his own image, after his own likeness*, and called his name Seth. Is there not something very significant in this expression, used here for the first and last time, as though the image of God reflected in the law of nature were henceforth effaced?

The narrative, only interrupted by this recapitulation, which traces the descent from Adam to Noah, proceeds with the crime of adultery, tracing it to the total overthrow of morality which preceded the Deluge. The concluding passage has been often interpreted in a way revolting to the feelings; and I think there can be few but will rejoice, should an explanation so simple as my view of the first origin of adultery conveys be deemed admissible. I give the passage according to Mr. Greenfield: "And it came to pass, when Adam began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto *them*, that the sons of the God saw the daughters of Adam, that they were fair, and they took them wives of all that they chose. And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not rule in man for ever, for that he also is flesh, yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years. The giants were in the earth in those days; and also, after that, when the sons of the God came in unto the daughters of Adam, and they bare children unto them, they became the mighty men, who were of old the men of the name." Dr. Maitland, as already hinted, by the sons of the God understands angels, and thinks it possible that the giants of mythology—sons of Cœlus and Terra—may not be mere fable, but descended from this intercourse between men and angels. He contends—and I think his arguments are very convincing—that by the angels "who kept not their first estate," mentioned in the Second Epistle of St. Peter, and in that of St. Jude, are intended the angels who here fell, and that such was the belief of the early Church. Criticising the arguments used to explain the passage as meaning marriages between the descendants of Cain and those of Seth, he says: "I appeal to the reader, whether there ever was a more absurd story made up to meet the exigency of interpretation? And yet Christian commentators adopt such trash." Gibbon says: "It was the universal sentiment, both of the

Church and of the heretics, that the demons were the authors, the patrons, and the objects of idolatry. Those rebellious spirits who had been degraded from the rank of angels, and cast down into the infernal pit." Surely, in the very many instances in which heathen fable approaches the letter of divine truth, it is not only more safe, but more consistent with probability, to suppose that the former may have been built on some vague tradition or obscure knowledge of the truth, than to allow for a moment that they could have had a common origin. Dr. Maitland is certainly not warranted in attributing the *giants* to this adulterous intercourse, as he supposes it, between men and angels, since it is said to have taken place "after that" they were in the earth.

The reader will at once see that I have opened the way for an easy and rational explanation of this passage. Dr. Maitland says, the Hebrew words, translated the sons of the God, are never applied to any but angels; but he does not dispute but that they are rightly translated, and if so, they seem here applied with propriety to man. Moses has, just before, taken us back to the creation, when man was made in the image of God; how appropriate, then, to speak of him here as the son of the God, contrasting him with that state of utter degradation into which he was fast sinking. There is no antithesis between sons of the God and daughters of Adam; the force is in the phrase "saw that they were fair" (or good), by the knowledge of good and evil; in the same sense as it is before said "they saw that they were naked." My interpretation is, that the law of nature, by which one wife, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, was allotted to man, was effaced, and that men began to *take wives*, indiscriminately, "of all which they chose." The decree pronounced in consequence—"My Spirit shall not rule in man for ever, seeing that he also is flesh,"—strikingly confirms this view. Man, having become wholly carnal, the spiritual instinct by which he reflected the image of his Maker was superseded by the imperfect light of knowledge.

There is nothing else in the antediluvian history which directly refers to the origin and progress of the crime of adultery: it is denounced as a foul and unnatural crime, involving more misery to mankind than any other. If, however, I am right in supposing that the temptation of woman has reference to this crime, we may read in the sentence pronounced on her a prophetic intimation not only of her degradation, but of subjection to the will of man, which it is easy to see were inevitable, and which history has fully established.

In addition to the pains of childbirth—in addition to her sorrow in

bringing children into a world of sorrow, instead of into bliss—it is decreed: “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” As between the brothers, Cain and Abel, to the elder it is said: “If thou doest well, thou wilt secure thy younger brother’s love, and thus mould his will to thine;” to woman, after she had done evil: “Thou wilt still cleave to thy husband, and he will rule over thee.” We might read it by the light of her past history, “He will be thy tyrant.” I am not going to enlarge upon the misery woman brings upon herself by her frailty and misplaced confidence in man, which it has been often said amounts to infatuation; nor yet on the degraded position she has held amongst uncivilised tribes: I wish rather to shew, that in human institutions in all ages down to the present time, all restrictions, all punishments of sins of incontinency, have been directed against the weaker and unprotected sex; whilst man has reserved to himself comparative immunity. Woman may well bless herself that it has been so—that she has borne the weight of the curse—since she has been kept the purer by it, but it has been brought about by a fearful amount of suffering. What the world would have been by this time, had woman been as immoral as man, we cannot conceive; but we do begin to see the effects of the seventy-fold vengeance on this sin in the present age—more appalling, perhaps, than at any former period of the world’s history, unless it be that which immediately preceded the deluge. Of this more hereafter. I must first cast a hasty retrospective glance upon the way the sin of adultery has been legislated upon by our pioneers in the work of promoting Christianity and civilisation.

By the law of Moses adultery was punished with death; but the punishment was awarded very unequally, according to the sex of the offender: the wife in all cases was condemned to die—the husband only if he sinned with a married woman. Our Saviour, on a memorable occasion, arraigned the injustice of this law, when called upon to confirm a conviction under it, saying to the accusers, “Let him that is without the sin cast the first stone.” I do not mean to say that He would in any case have consigned a human being to death; He came, as He said, not to condemn but to save; but that His words, “Neither do I condemn thee,” must be understood as implying that He would not sanction such an unequal law. It was conceded by Moses, like the law of divorce, to the hardness of their hearts. “In the beginning,” He says, “it was not so: He that made them at the first, made them male and female.” He would recognise no lower standard than man’s first state, when chastity was the law of nature, written in the heart of man and

woman alike. At the flood God restored the equality of males and females; but in the Patriarchal age succeeding polygamy became general, and morality so lax, that in the code of laws compiled by Moses, to be enforced by penalties, many things are excepted which are forbidden by the letter and spirit of the decalogue. The law of chastity, like the priesthood of Melchisedec, is "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." The spiritual life was at the first a life of chastity; this is God's eternal law, which it should be the first object of reason and religion to restore. Still, however laxly observed, the law of Moses denounced the sin of adultery as a capital crime, and, as compared with other nations, it is allowed that the Jews were chaste.

Adultery was punished by death, by putting out the eyes, and other severe and ignominious penalties, by heathen nations. Man learnt to appreciate the comfort and blessedness of domestic purity, but would not submit, except to promote this, to any restraint on his own licentiousness. Lust was made a deity and worshipped; the wisdom and philosophy of Greece attached no sense of moral turpitude to this sin. Over-indulgence, as in eating or drinking, was held to be immoral, and man was to be protected in his right to keep his wife and daughters pure; but, by the laws of Solon and Lycurgus, those who were most lax and unscrupulous in this respect were esteemed the best servants of the state. Socrates prostituted his wife to his friends,\* and in the model republic of Plato, the grossest communism in women was advocated. Heroes and legislators were to be bred, like cattle, by care and judicious selection. I cite these disgusting facts to shew that mere human wisdom never can see the beauty of holiness; and that, with such a foul defect, the moral philosophy of Greece, admirable as it was, never could have reformed mankind. The Gnostic Christians, so called, seeing to what the unnatural perversion of the law of chastity—as held by the ascetics of the early Church—was tending, and ridiculing the first revelation of this law, according to the literal acceptation, as mere fable, fell back upon the impurity of the philosophy to which they belonged.

Chastity was more honoured in Rome than in Greece; but the sentence of Cato—that the frequenter of brothels was a virtuous member of the state, as thereby indirectly promoting purity—shews that there was

\* And still "her desire was unto her husband," for which she was unfeelingly turned out of the room, because her sobs disturbed the serenity of his last moments.

not much anxiety there to extend the virtue to the male sex. Though gross misconceptions of the nature of this virtue soon arose in the Christian church, there can be no doubt that the first Christians were more chaste than man had been since his apostasy; but they soon became involved in heresies and controversy, more intent on doctrine than discipline. From one cause or another, the moral beauty of chastity cannot, since the first centuries, be imputed much more confidently to Christian countries than to heathen Rome.

I intend henceforward to confine myself to my own country, and to a brief review of the course of legislation, such as there has been, either ecclesiastical or temporal, bearing upon sensual vice; and its aspect at the present time. From the introduction of Christianity to the Reformation, offences of this kind were left to the jurisdiction of the Church; and doubtless, from the power she exercised, some restraint was imposed upon licentiousness; but, as we shall presently see, the canon law—which is to some extent law even to the present time—though a dead letter as regards morality, was always, in the opinion of Blackstone, culpably lax and indulgent to vice. How far it may have been impartial as between the sexes, I cannot say; but from all that we learn of the state of morality—from reading of faithless queens perishing on the scaffold, nuns immured alive, and lewd women whipped at the cart's tail, and no such summary chastisements inflicted upon men—it is difficult to believe that they were impartially administered. Since the Reformation, the Church has had little power to inflict punishment on sins of incontinence, and the State has refused to assist her, or to undertake the work itself. In the first days of the Reformation, it was at once seen that, in the altered position of Church and State, prompt legislation was required. Mr. Froude, in his *History of England*, cites what he calls “a noticeable letter” of Calvin to the Protector Somerset, written 1548, in which, after urging him to use the sword for the punishment of heretics, “stubborn people in the superstition of the Antichrist of Rome,”—to whom he presses that no moderation be used—he concludes: “Lastly, the discipline of the law must be extended from crimes against society to sin against God. Thefts, fightings, extortion, are sharply punished, because that men thereby are offended, and meantime whoredoms, adulteries, and drunkenness are suffered as things lawful or of little importance. That the honour of God be mindful unto you, punish the crime whereof men are not wont to make any great matter.” Four years later, Cranmer and the bishops of the Church (according to Mr. Froude, on Calvin's advice,) demanded the right to punish sin by spiritual censures—spiritual censures enforced by secular



penalties. "Mankind," he continues, "notwithstanding their frailties, are theoretically loyal to goodness; and could there have been any security that the clergy would have confined their prosecutions to acts of immorality, their desire might perhaps have to some extent been indulged. But to the Church of Calvin, as well as the Church of Rome, the darkest breach of moral law was venial in comparison of errors of opinion." This may be true; but unfortunately the appeal was not made to mankind, but to a few bad men in power, of whom it is a stretch of charity to suppose that they had any scruples about persecution: they found it too ready a means of plunder and oppression to let it pass out of their own hands. That the Protector was deaf to the advice of Calvin to make laws for the suppression of vice, and his successors in the Protectorate to the bishops, when they petitioned to be allowed to legislate, can only be attributed to indifference on the subject.

The popular voice has since had more influence in the councils of the State; but, notwithstanding the loyalty of mankind to goodness, it has not been raised, except for a short period, to call for legislation to suppress vice. An attempt was made to constitute adultery a crime in the reign of James I. "In the year 1604, a bill was brought into Parliament, 'for the better repressing the detestable crime of adultery.' This bill went through a Committee of the House of Lords; but, upon being reported, it was suggested to the House that the object contemplated by the measure was the private interest of some individuals, and not the public good, whereupon the bill was dropped." (*Parl. Hist.*) Under the Commonwealth adultery was made a capital felony in either sex. I cannot tell whether the punishment was ever inflicted, or what was the effect of such a law, but it was the law of England for about ten years. Blackstone says, "At the Restoration, when men, from an abhorrence of the hypocrisy of the late times, fell into a contrary extreme of licentiousness, it was not thought proper to renew a law of such unfashionable rigour. And these offences have ever since been left to the feeble coercion of the Spiritual Court, according to the rules of the Canon Law, which has treated the offence of incontinence, nay even adultery itself, with a great degree of tenderness and lenity." (*Com.* iv. 64.) Thus adultery, which by the law of Moses, and by the law of many heathen countries, was a capital offence, by the Statute Law of England is no offence at all. A man may, indeed, be sued at law for pecuniary compensation for the wrong done by his licentiousness, but if he is rich enough to disregard this, or too poor to pay damages, he has nothing to fear. Adultery is, as Byron said derisively, "a marketable vice."

As regards punishment, therefore, men and women are pretty equally

exempt, but I fear the amount of suffering for incontinency is borne chiefly by the latter; and there are laws to check the evils which lust brings upon society, in which the principle of punishing only the weaker sex seems to gain strength by precedents. First as to the law of bastardy. By a statute of Elizabeth, if an illegitimate child became chargeable to the parish, both parents were liable to punishment—Blackstone thinks corporal punishment: the only practical application I have met with of the principle, *Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander*; but in the next reign this law was repealed, and the mother only was sent to the house of correction for one year; on a second offence, till she could find sureties not to offend again. By these statutes, amended from time to time, justices had the power to compel both parents to contribute to the support of the child, at their discretion; and hence arose considerable encouragement to immorality. The punishment of imprisonment not being often inflicted, the woman's oath being considered sufficient evidence of the paternity, and the means of the putative father being taken into consideration, bad women with illegitimate children might be placed in improved circumstances by their sins. In the last reign, therefore, all former laws on bastardy were repealed, and the entire burden of maintaining the child was laid upon the woman. At first she had no power to call upon the father to contribute, though if the child became chargeable, the parish might. It was soon found, however, that this rigour made the law, as regarded the man, a nullity. The woman had no inducement to assist the parish in proving the paternity, and it was therefore soon amended. If an affiliation can be established, which it seldom can, the man may be ordered to pay towards the support of the child; but in no case, however rich he may be, more than two-and-sixpence per week, this being considered half the maintenance of any pauper child to the age of sixteen. Till the child attain this age the mother can have no relief from her parish, except in the workhouse; though, should he become disabled or infirm, his having illegitimate children is no bar to the man's having out-relief. Should the man die or abscond, the woman is liable to the whole maintenance; should the woman die or abscond, the man is only liable for the weekly contribution imposed: indeed, as the child would probably be taken to the workhouse, he would generally escape altogether. In one respect the law seems indulgent to the frailty of the weaker sex. Should a woman having illegitimate children marry, all her children are thenceforth regarded as her husband's, even should she become a widow. Having myself had a good deal to do with the administration of this law, during the long time that it has now been

in force, I have no hesitation in saying that it has not worked well, that it has not diminished crime, and that it has burdened the rates. The chief good it effects is that illegitimate children are on the whole better brought up. There is another effect of its operation which is often grievously oppressive to women, offers immunity to villany, and is burdensome to ratepayers. The affiliation must be within twelve months of the birth of the child, unless it can be proved that within that period the father paid money for its support. A not unfrequent consequence is that a man induces a woman to live with him, and they have a family, he deserts her, perhaps marries another, the burthen of maintaining the children is thrown upon the woman. The fact that she and her children have lived in the man's house for years is no evidence in law that they are his: it must be proved that he *gave money* for the support of each child within twelve months of its birth; and she and her children are consequently thrown upon the parish. The burden being thrown on the mother presses incidentally on the rates in another way. In the majority of cases in rural districts, sooner than her daughter should go to the workhouse the grandmother takes charge of the illegitimate child or children, and thus impoverishes herself and husband, who come early on the parish. As a general rule, by the present law, the fathers of base children contribute nothing to their support.

Such law as there is for the preservation of public decency and decorum, is directed exclusively against women; man's liberty must not be interfered with. A woman is liable to be sent to prison if she is seen in public for immoral purposes, though she may be driven to it by want and tempted thereto by man's gold. A man may publicly consort with immoral women, tempt them to sin by offering money, and no law can touch him; nay, he may be guilty of the grossest indecency, and unless a modest female should be present, whose delicacy it can be proved he intended to insult, he is equally safe. It is not long since the public was indignantly scandalized by a police report from one of the Metropolitan courts. A man and woman were brought before the magistrate charged with committing the last act of indecency in one of the public squares. The woman was, I suppose, imprisoned; as to this I cannot now speak: but the man was discharged, with the friendly hint that there were plenty of brothels in London. "*Macte virtute esto*," was still the "*sententia dia Catonis*" in this nineteenth century of the Christian era. Nor, as the exponent of the law, was the magistrate to be blamed: neither frequenting brothels nor the scandalous outrage he had committed are crimes, in man, in the eye of the law.

The public press was very indignant, but nothing came of it; nor will any improvement be effected as long as the false distinction is drawn between immorality and crime. This distinction is made in the letter of Calvin previously quoted. Murders, thefts, and extortion are sins against society, and are sharply punished; but whoredoms and adulteries are only sins against God, and we leave it to Him to punish them, as it is declared that He will: "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." "If Cain be avenged sevenfold, surely Lamech seventy and seven fold." Lust is beginning to be styled *the social evil*, and society will be driven by the suffering and shame which it entails to acknowledge it as a crime against itself, and to regard the laws of God as the only way of escape. The daily news teems with appalling tragedies. Suicides by unfortunate women, child murders and abortions, pure and innocent girls violated and murdered, almost cease to excite horror; and the revelations made in the proceedings of the Divorce Court forbid the conclusion that this holocaust of victims on the shrine of Lust has checked his ravages in the homes of England.

The question will be asked, Could any good now be effected by legislating on this subject? If the answer must be in the negative, I fear we are on the brink of a yawning gulf. Doubtless, the difficulties are great, and increase every year that the immunity of crime is continued—"Sero medicina paratur, cum mala per longas convalere moras." Something would be done if only the existing laws were amended, so as to bear equally upon offenders. Much would be done if the law only declared that all sin was criminal, and that most so which entails most evil and suffering on society. All laws are defective which are not in harmony with the laws of God and the laws of nature, which are one. When we really hate sin, the specious sophistry that man is not to be made moral by statute is dropped at once. The foulest exhibition of lust—unnatural crime, as it is called—was punished with death by a statute of George IV. The object of punishment is reformation, not vengeance; and sin which is common—not that which all who are not sunk below the level of brutes abhor—demands most attention. "That the honour of God be mindful unto you, punish the crime whereof men are not wont to make any great matter."

The crime which, next to lust, has perhaps most defaced the aspect of moral beauty in this country is drunkenness. It is not mentioned in Scripture till after the deluge—probably was unknown; but its prevalence since, notwithstanding its disgusting and degrading effects, only shews how slow men are in attaining to the knowledge of good and evil. This

sin, in the time of Calvin, seems to have been prevalent, and it was not very long before it was carried to such excess that it forced itself on the attention of the legislature. In the reign of James I., wise, stringent, and efficient laws were enacted to suppress it. The preamble of the first of these acts recites: "Whereas the loathsome and odious synne of drunkenness is of late growen into common use within this realme, being the roote and foundation of many other enormous synnes, as bloodshed, stabbinge, murder, swearinge, fornicacion, adulterye, and such like, to the great dishonour of God, and of our nacion, the overthrowe of many good artes and manuell trades, the disablinge of dyvers workmen, and the general ymperishinge of many good subjects, abusively wasting the good creatures of God," &c. Mr. Paishley, in his *Pauperism and Poor Laws*, remarks on this description of the effects of drunkenness: "My own experience in courts of criminal justice, extending over a good many years, next following the commencement of my practice at the bar, enables me to say that most of the consequences of drunkenness, as here described, probably prevail in England at the present day, about as generally as they can have done in any other age or country; and that certainly a very large proportion of all the crime which is yearly prosecuted at Quarter Sessions and Assizes originates in this source. The experience of every one, whether judge, counsel, attorney, jurymen, or witness, who has had to attend much in courts of criminal justice in England, must lead him to this conclusion."

Surely here is sufficient evidence that this is a sin against society; and though more strictly immorality than adultery, as being a sin of excess, it has, by our laws, been constituted a crime for more than two centuries. How is it, that the "wholesome laws," as Blackstone styles them, which were then passed, have become a dead letter?—for such they are, or nearly so. Drunkenness in the streets, or in public-houses, is punishable by fine and the stocks; for a second offence a man may be bound in sureties not to offend again, or imprisoned in default; but the police never interfere with it, till some other crime is committed. As long as a man can walk they will assist him to stagger home, and perhaps be called in in an hour's time to arrest him for murder. It cannot be said that public opinion is opposed to the administration of the law; on the contrary, it is clamorous for greater severity against a crime so universally odious. I fear that the only explanation that can be given of the apathy of government will be that it derives an enormous revenue from the intemperance of the people. I know the opinion is entertained that the surest means of combating this vice is the progress of education

and morality ; but this is equally true of all vice, and we may have to wade through much filth before the people attain to such principles of morality and religion as will make them proof against drink. There are those living who can remember when the highest and most polished classes of society were as intemperate, or more so, than the lower orders are now. Nor is the progress towards improvement uniform : the Scotch peasantry—in the main a moral and well-educated people—are said to be much less temperate than they have been. I believe that drunkenness calls for the interference of the law, perhaps more obviously than any other vice, and that it might very easily be suppressed, at least as a public nuisance and national disgrace.\*

I do not intend to search deeper into the calendar of crime. There are, alas ! many foul blots in the national character—covetousness, for instance, and pride—which must be wiped out before we can look for sound moral salvation ; they are, however, complicated in their operation, and do not present themselves outwardly in such hideous contrast with the laws of God and the harmony and beauty of nature. There is, however, another aspect in which society presents this contrast almost as painfully, and that is, in the sufferings of the poor. Such destitution as exists in this country must be a very fruitful source of crime, and should attract the most earnest attention of the State : the crime and suffering which result from it are the natural retribution on neglect. Men sometimes speak as if poverty were an ordinance of God—"The poor shall never cease out of the land." Then sin and suffering must be ordinances of God. "Whensoever ye will, ye may do them good," is the ordinance of love.

I am not going into a discussion of the Poor-Laws : of them I shall only remark that the same mistake has been committed as in the treatment of crime—remedies, not prevention, have been sought after. Had as much attention, and one-hundredth part of the expense, been devoted to the prevention of poverty as has been given to its relief since the time of Elizabeth, we should not now want Poor-Laws. It is no Utopian theory of my own that this gigantic evil might be removed, were the State, or society, to set to work in earnest in the right direction ; though it must now be a work of much time and difficulty. Mr. John Stuart Mill says : "No one whose opinion deserves a moment's

\* As it possibly may occur to some of my readers that they have seen several of the remarks here adduced before, I may as well state that they did appear, with others on the suppression of drunkenness, in a letter which I sent to the *Morning Chronicle*, signed "A MIDDLESEX MAGISTRATE," June 12, 1854.

consideration, can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty, in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals."—(*Fraser's Magazine*, October, 1861.) This is the direction in which the "wisdom of society" should apply itself—to make men provident; and I believe the task would not be difficult. Men require very little encouragement to induce them to lay by for the future. The success which has attended penny clubs, clothing clubs, &c., in a small way, would be extended to plans of more widely-extending providence, if only a little assistance were afforded them, and the poor could depend upon a reward on their efforts; but they have been left to their own resources, and cruelly disappointed. Thousands upon thousands have subscribed out of their small earnings to Benefit Societies for the greater part of their lives, and been left without any relief against sickness and old age by the breaking of such societies. The "wisdom of society" has not furnished them with the machinery for safe providence, or, seeing that it was too expensive for them, they have had recourse to that which was unsafe. The fact is, that day-labourers in general have not the power to do it without assistance: they may provide against sickness, but as long as they see no resource but the workhouse or a pauper's dole for old age, it is too much to expect of them that they should be provident. There are now safe Benefit Societies in most counties, but they do not hold out any provision for old age, within reach of the poor: were this supplied by the assistance of their richer brethren, they would gladly subscribe to their power, and the rich would, in the end, be benefited to more than the amount of their contributions by the relief to the Poor-Rate. The harmony of nature, the law of love, would be best carried out, did the richer join such associations, not as patrons, but as brethren. Did every man who could afford it belong to a Benefit Society (and how many can say that they may never want the assistance of one themselves?) there would be an honest independence within reach of all but the dissolute and lawless.

Mr. Mill's position, "that the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, by the wisdom of society," will, I have no doubt, be considered by many untenable, if not profane. It is true that the world by wisdom knows not God: it is by the defect or mistakes of human wisdom that it does not know Him; but it is by being renewed in his Spirit and understanding, by being taught wisdom of God that

fallen man is to be converted unto Him. I am not here speaking of the fountain of salvation, but of the means which God uses to effect it in us. St. James says, it is wisdom which we must ask of God in faith, that patience may have its perfect work, that we may be perfect.

The means within our reach for perfecting wisdom are chiefly education and laws for the restraint of evil. Mankind must have advanced much nearer towards perfection than it has yet done, before one will be less necessary than the other.

The subject of education is at the present time engrossing the attention of the public and the legislature in this country ; but I fear that what ought to be the first object of education—to restore in man the lost image of God, to bring the laws of man into conformity with the laws of God—is not sufficiently made the study of Christian philosophy. Ethics or morals are not made the first object of science, as they were by heathen philosophers. Now, admitting that the Bible does contain all that is necessary for us to know in order to arrive at a state of salvation or health, and that the substance of a perfect code of morals has been deduced from it, as in our Church Catechism ; still it is but a text book, a *vade mecum*, by which a sincere and earnest man may be at no loss in finding the path of duty towards God and man ; and Christian teaching seldom goes beyond this : consequently, progress is by individual efforts, not by political system. It should be the study of Christian philosophy to demonstrate that the Divine morality, as revealed in the Bible and in nature, “exalteth a nation” as well as promotes individual happiness.

The perfection of His creatures is the will of God ; but, as Mr. Mill remarks in the article of *Fraser* already quoted, “We need a doctrine of ethics, carefully followed out, to interpret to us the will of God.” Christianity is at one with philosophy in asserting that virtue is the only way of happiness ; but I believe there are many who are anxious for the spread of Christianity, who think that for men to become moral on any other foundation than faith in Christ, rather hinders than helps them to believe unto salvation. This opinion seems to me as directly opposed to the teaching of Christ as to the deductions of reason, which would infer that the purity of Christ’s religion would be more attractive to the moral than to the immoral. When the Jews were astonished at Christ’s teaching, and asked, “How knoweth this man letters?” He answered, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me” (the eternal purpose of God). “If any man,” He continues, “will do [will to do, *θελη ποιειν*] the will of God, he shall [or will] know of the doctrine,



whether I speak of myself." By what can it be here meant that we are enabled to judge of the soundness of doctrine, but by the precepts of morality? There were those, even among the Scribes, who could apply this test. "Well, Master," exclaims one, "thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but He; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifice." That philosophy did good service to Christianity for several centuries, and paved the way for the Reformation, the reader need only turn to Mr. Kingsley's lectures on *Alexandria and her Schools* to be satisfied; and although he arrives at the conclusion, "It was well for us, after all, that the plain strength of the Puritans, unphilosophical as they were, swept it all away," it has been contended by others that the Puritans, by depreciating philosophy, and by narrow bigotry, have too generally reached the same isolation from the common interests of humanity. Mr. Roscoe, in his *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*, speaking of the ancient sects of philosophy, says, "There were none whose tenets were so elevated and sublime, so calculated to withdraw the mind from the gratifications of sense, and the inferior objects of human pursuits, as that of the Platonists, which, by demonstrating the imperfection of every sensual enjoyment, and every temporal blessing, rose at length to the contemplation of the Supreme Cause, and placed the ultimate good in a perfect abstraction from the world, and in implicit love of God. How far these doctrines may be consistent with our nature and destination, and whether such sentiments may not rather lead to a dereliction than a completion of our duty, may well be doubted; but they are well calculated to attract a great and aspiring mind. Mankind, however, often arrive at the same conclusion by different means; and we have, in our own days, seen a sect rise up, whose professors, employing a mode of deduction precisely opposite to the Platonists of the fifteenth century, strongly resemble them in their sentiments and manners. Those important conclusions which the one derived from the highest cultivation of intellect, the other has found in an extreme of humiliation, and a constant degradation and contempt of all human endowments. Like navigators who steer a course directly opposite, they meet at the last at the same point of the globe; and the sublime reveries of the Platonists, as they appear in the works of some of their followers, and the doctrines of the modern Methodists, are at times scarcely distinguishable in their respective writings." Both, it seems, committed the same error in making doctrine of more importance

than the reformation of the world; both spoke more of themselves than of Him that sent them.

Many circumstances have combined to make the teaching of Christianity in all ages more that of individual, than of general, universal reformation and salvation. The first Christians, as already shewn, looking forward to no long future, were chiefly intent on warning men to flee from the wrath to come. Succeeding ages, receiving this impress of doctrine, and superstitiously mingling the scriptural metaphorical denunciations of the punishment of sin with the heathen descriptions of Tartarus, and an infernal reign of demons at war with Heaven, dwelling in tormenting flames of material fire, made the God of love a God of vengeance, and self-preservation the moving principle. Even in apostolic times this spirit was growing. St. Paul says of his fellow-teachers, "All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ." And how often do we even now hear from the pulpit the selfish maxim, that the one purpose for which a man is sent into the world is to save his own soul. If so, then labour and suffering have indeed been a curse, and not a school wherein man is to learn "to love God with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength." It is not the teaching of the law, the gospel, or of nature, which alike proclaim that man is sent into the world to do good. In this only can he be a follower of God or of Christ. "It cost more to redeem his soul, so that he must leave that alone for ever." But allowing that the future state of the sinner cannot be painted in too dark colours, I doubt whether holding up the picture is the most likely way to reclaim sinners or society. Men will learn to believe in God's providence in things that are seen, more readily than in the unseen. "As to the future," they will say, "we perhaps know as much about it as you do;" but they cannot shut their eyes to the fact, that in this world sin brings suffering; nor will they shut their hearts to the influence of love.

Man is sent into the world to do the will of God; would Christian men unite to do this, with all the heart, and all the understanding, and soul, and strength, they would understand doctrine, and soon settle their creeds. At present there seems little hope of this: there was more unity of purpose in heathen philosophy; and what they accomplished St. Paul adduces in favourable contrast to the stubbornness of the Jews. They were a law to themselves, through the light of conscience, taught of God, as many are to a great extent even till now, without the *knowledge* of God. There are, and always have been, men who have attained to a high degree of excellence without religion, in such virtues as attract

universal admiration—men of honour, as they are called, who through good teaching and examples have scarcely, even from childhood, felt any temptation to do anything mean or dishonest. This is, according to Aristotle, the most perfect moral virtue, the virtue of habit ; and, as far as it goes, it is perfect virtue, the most like that of man in his first estate, when he sinned not, because “there was no temptation,” and yet “unable to make the comers thereunto perfect.” This brings me to a question, which it is impossible, and which I do not wish, to evade : In what sense are we justified by faith only ?

The meaning attached to this doctrine, and to another which springs out of it, that of predestination and election, and the prominence given to them by Calvin and other reformers, have, I think, been a great obstacle in the way of moral progress. How, indeed, could it be otherwise ? How can men, believing that all except the elect are from all eternity predestined to eternal torment, and that the elect must be saved of necessity, busy themselves with the regeneration of mankind ? Both these doctrines rest mainly, if not entirely, on St. Paul ; and I think the point we have just arrived at—the perfection of moral virtue according to the Aristotelian philosophy—affords a clue to understand his meaning. Aristotle holds that all virtue is imperfect that is not habitual : nothing which is not done spontaneously, without effort, is worthy of the name. And how is this virtue to be attained ? By practice ; by the repeated performance of virtuous deeds till the habit is acquired ; in short, justification, or the making a man just or righteous, was by works. St. Paul, described by Mr. Kingsley, as “a practised Platonic dialectician,” addressing Roman and Greek converts, who were likely to be familiar with or to encounter this philosophy, combats it with its own weapons, pure logical arguments. If, he argues, men are made just by doing just actions, how did Abraham attain to that righteousness, by which, at the command of God, he offered up his son Isaac, and afterwards left his country, going out whither he knew not ?—was his obedience the result of practice ? Or again, when David had fallen into grievous sin, and the Lord had put it away, and had given him a new heart, how could he call himself blessed ? Came his repentance by works ? No, he argues ; righteousness can only come by faith in a living God—a doctrine perfectly new to his Gentile converts. When he addresses his own countrymen, to whom the idea was familiar, his language is very different : he says nothing of justification, but, commencing with a definition of faith, cites a host of examples of its efficacy, concluding with the exhortation, “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that

doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus *the author and finisher of our faith.*"

St. Paul knew that this explanation of the effects of faith would raise other questions. If righteousness is of faith, and faith is of God, why is not faith offered to all? Why did Plato live in the darkness of heathenism, he Paul in the light of Gospel truth? To this question he professes he can give no answer, but that it was so ordained in the counsel and foreknowledge of God. All the cases cited refer to temporal privileges—to the position occupied by individuals and nations in this world: the higher the privileges the greater the responsibility. Jacob was chosen to build up the kingdom of Israel, whilst Esau, who appears the nobler character of the two, was set aside; perhaps to be the happier and better man. Judas was elected to the apostleship; the Israelites were chosen to great privileges, and abused them; rejecting Christ, they were rejected of God, and the Gentiles called. Looking to the present state of the Christian world, and the light that has been given to it, we can only ascribe it to "Christ in them the hope of glory," that they have not been rejected also. As all have sinned, and gone out of the way, none but God can raise up leaders, and order events, to bring them back; and who shall ask, Why hast Thou made me thus, or placed me here? I do not see that the overruling power of God affects the free agency of man more in the turning points of his destiny than in his most trifling actions; and that St. Paul did believe in the free agency and moral responsibility of man, no one reading one of his letters can doubt. But it will be urged, God said, I will harden Pharaoh's heart; how then is he responsible? Whatever is done in the order of God's providence may be said to be done by Him. I understand no more in this expression than is conveyed in the first intimation of Pharaoh's obduracy to Moses: "*I know* that the king of Egypt will not let you go." Pharaoh was as much a free agent as I am now in writing this. We know what his hardness of heart brought upon him in this world; of the future we are only told that he will be judged like others, according to his works, and his works according to the light and power vouchsafed to him.

I am not attempting to reconcile the free will of man with the foreknowledge and overruling providence of God—every sane man's conscience tells him that he is responsible for his actions: I only say that no new difficulty is created by the philosophical investigation of the subject by St. Paul. Nor do I think he expected that his opinions would ever be brought forward as articles of faith or rules of practice.

Perhaps we may approach nearer to an understanding of his meaning, if we return for a little to the first part of the subject—justification by faith. What is the most obvious deduction from this doctrine? That by it all merit or boasting is excluded. Even according to the rules of Aristotle, we may see that in perfect virtue (and in some virtues something very near perfection is attained), there is little or no merit or attractiveness in the sight of men. In that which perhaps he considered the highest test of moral virtue—contempt of death at the call of duty, two men may march side by side to meet the enemy, perhaps to certain death; a veteran from habit and familiarity with danger, without effort and without fear; the other in his first battle almost dead with fear; both march on unflinchingly to death; and to which do we attach most merit—to the coward or the brave? Had Scipio attained to such virtue that he could have regarded the charms of his captive with indifference, the world would have given him little credit for his continency. We estimate merit by difficulties, and there is no difficulty in perfect virtue: if we must needs boast, we must boast of the things that concern our infirmities.

But St. Paul's arguments imply that even in such virtue as is here set forth, boasting is not altogether excluded. There is indeed no effort in such virtue, but how has it been attained? By severe discipline, by bringing the body under and keeping it in subjection. Is there no merit in this? There is before men, he answers, but not before God; but by the righteousness which is of faith it is wholly excluded. Granting to Abraham such faith that he staggered not for a moment, but believed that God would keep His promise, even by raising his son from the dead, and even men will attach no merit to his obedience. In all this we see Goethe's axiom confirmed, that "No one knows what he is doing whilst he acts rightly, but of what is wrong we are always conscious." As the fame of the poet or painter often rests on that which costs him not a thought, so in doing good "the left hand knoweth not what the right hand doeth."

That justification does not, as some schools of theology have maintained, mean perfect absolution from sin in the sight of God, is more clearly demonstrable, than with regard to election. The word means, either making a person just or good, or declaring, holding him to be so. Justification by faith must be the former; when we speak of justifying God, it must be in the latter sense. There is nothing to support the doctrine of imputed righteousness or justification, as attaching the merit to a person of that which he has not. Righteousness could only in

this sense be imputed to man by God; but St. Paul himself imputes righteousness to man without works. He says, "Therefore we conclude (λογιζομεθα) that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." It is the same word as is elsewhere translated *impute*; logically, in the language of the schools, justification (being or doing what is just) is predicated of certain acts, and St. Paul maintains that the acts he cites were just and right, and that they were done by faith, not by practice. How is it possible to believe that universal absolution is declared of all St. Paul's cloud of witnesses—of Rahab, of Gideon, and Samson, of all who passed through the Red Sea, or even of Abraham and David? Had they possessed the same faith in the moral purposes and government of God, they would have acted very differently on many occasions. St. Paul expressly says, that he is speaking of "what Abraham *appertaining to the flesh* hath found:" he does not lift the veil of the flesh, and intrude into the Holy of Holies.

It appears to me quite evident, not only that St. Paul went into the theory of these doctrines in a spirit of philosophical enquiry with which the first Christians did not generally concern themselves, but that his theories excited some apprehension and distrust with other apostles. St. Peter says, that there are in his writings "things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own loss" (απωλειαν). And we find St. James, an unlearned Galilean, openly controverting the statements and positions of St. Paul. Surely it is safer to suppose that he misunderstood St. Paul's meaning, than to make the same Spirit breathe hot or cold according to the circumstances of the Church, which is the only way I have seen it attempted to reconcile them. One example will be sufficient. St. Paul says, Rahab was justified by faith, and thereby saved herself and family. St. James says, had she only believed and done nothing, she would not have saved herself or them, and therefore she was justified by works. St. Paul is looking to the moving principle by which she was brought to do the right; St. James to that for which she was pronounced right: there is no contradiction between the two—nor even between St. Paul and Aristotle, granting that faith without works is dead, granting that the practice of virtue is the way to perfection, "Whence," St. Paul asks, "comes the power to do good or virtuous actions?" Aristotle would answer, "Reason teaches us that vice brings misery." It is reason, then, the gift of God, not virtue, which justifies; but there must be something more than reason: Abraham did not obey by reasoning; nor did reason give repentance and a new heart to David: there must be faith in God.

Reason, the knowledge of good and evil, has wrought death, and has no power to give life: had there been a law of works which could have given life, verily salvation might have been by the law; but life is of grace, the free gift of God in Christ, of whose quickening Spirit we are partakers in as far as we are one with Him by faith.

I have little to say on the other means of moral reformation, punishment. The object of human laws and human punishments should be the same as that of the laws and punishments of God, to reclaim and deter from sin. Whether from imperfect translation, or from the national pride of the Jews, who attributed the overthrow of the Gentiles to the vengeance of God against their enemies, I cannot say; but in their political history we certainly find little of that love and mercy to enemies which were inculcated by Christ. As we believe that their historians were mistaken in supposing that it was God's purpose to raise them to temporal sovereignty over all the nations of the world, it is possible that they may also have misinterpreted the means by which they were raised to that power and glory to which they did attain. Their prophets had desired to hear things which Christ's followers heard, and had not heard them. Vengeance with them seems almost to have been worshipped as one of the dearest attributes of God. The heathen mythology personified it as a halting hag, who dogged the footsteps of the offender to his destruction, echoing the Psalmist, "Evil shall hunt the wicked person, to overthrow him." The spirit of Christianity, even the Christian teaching of the Old Testament, reveals God to us as a God of love, who willeth not the death of a sinner. By the vengeance, then, of God, as already intimated, I understand the suffering and misery, which, in the order of God's providence, naturally follow as the consequence of sin. This is the opinion of Bishop Butler, as expressed in the chapter of the *Analogy* on Punishment, not only as regards temporal, but eternal punishments in a future state. After enlarging upon the laws by which the whole happiness of life is seen to be destroyed by sin and licentiousness, he says, "These things are not what we call accidental, or to be met with now and then, but they are things of every day's experience; they proceed from general laws—very general ones—by which God governs the world, in the natural course of His providence. And they are so analogous to what religion teaches us concerning the future punishment of the wicked, so much of a piece with it, that both would naturally be expressed in the very same words, and manner of description."

Butler, it is true, stops short of the inference which seems to me

equally natural, that, as temporal punishment is intended to bring repentance and amendment of life, so future punishment, represented as a purgatorial fire, may, by the torments of remorse, be ordained to bring about the final restitution of all things to the reign of Christ. He seems to argue rather that as there is, even in this life, a limit to God's long-suffering, after which there remains no room for repentance, still less can we expect it in a future state. I cannot trace the sequence, nor can I see how it is possible to reconcile the doctrine that future punishment must necessarily be eternal, with the express declaration of our Saviour that some will be beaten with few stripes.

The most awful thought concerning punishment, which forces itself with terrible conviction on the mind, is that suffering for sin in this world frequently, perhaps generally, is derived from the sins of others more than from our own; and that our own sins may entail misery on others to an extent we cannot conceive. Supposing that death decides the eternal doom of all—that after death there remains for the wicked only inexorable vengeance, well might we ask with the Jews, "Who did sin—this man, or his parents?" "Neither this man, nor his parents," Christ answers, "but that the works of God [God's eternal laws] might be manifested in him." The sin is perhaps more ours, the sin of his country, of humanity; but the retribution falls on him. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" that is, in your sins; and we know to whom it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment. But if "when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it," it is equally true, "when one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it." The blessings of civilization, the wisdom by which we turn unto God, are, under Him, derived from those who have been before us, and those who are around us, more than from ourselves. This oneness of the members helps us to understand our oneness with Him whose members we are, though we are so slow to believe it. When, since the world began, was such a motive held out to man to assist and support his brethren, to promote their welfare in every way, as Christ has vouchsafed to give: "Inasmuch as ye do it to the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me?" And yet I repeat, morality, the duty of man to his neighbour, was more studied by heathen philosophy as a subject of political science than it has been in Christian times.

I am not going to enter on the difficult subject of criminal law. It has, however, sometimes occurred to me, that the principle I have just traced in divine retribution, that, in this world at least, it generally falls on communities rather than on individuals, might in some degree be ex-



tended to human legislation. Governors, indeed, never hesitate to adopt it when the exigency of the circumstances require it. In times of sedition and tumult, the liberties of all are placed under what at other times would be called unconstitutional restraint. The same is done in times of pestilence and famine; and in wars all are taxed to the uttermost to bring such a calamity to an end. No such straining of the constitution is ever applied to the suppression of moral pestilence and the war with sin; but it perhaps might be with success, and would be, were our apprehensions as sensitive to the danger. A heavy fine might be levied on a parish, on information that they had allowed a brothel to exist for a certain time; instead of leaving it to the authorities, who perhaps have an interest in it, to suppress it or not as they may think fit. Had a parish to pay a fee to the registrar for the birth of every illegitimate child, employers, as rate-payers, might take more interest in the moral conduct and decent housing of their labourers. To close all the public houses in a neighbourhood after the unwonted prevalence of drunkenness, and debauchery would have much more effect than mulcting an unfortunate publican now and then. The law is still "a schoolmaster," and the principle of making the many responsible for the good conduct of the few, was, I think, the main feature of the system of the late Dr. Arnold, one of the greatest of schoolmasters. It is certainly more in accordance with divine economy than the old plan of whipping another boy instead of a royal pupil, as woman still does penance for the lords of creation.

It is not my intention to prosecute this inquiry into the first principles of morality and the reformation of morals more deeply. I have thought it necessary to touch thus superficially on subjects of vital importance, in justice to myself; because, having been led to entertain different opinions from those usually taught on some particulars of man's early history and position in the world, as revealed in the Bible, I wished to shew that I have not intruded them as mere novelties, but that they have a direct bearing on the subject of beauty, and that they are not only in conformity with, but uphold the paramount importance of morality and religion. That they will expose me to the imputation of *rationalism*, I am prepared to expect; and if any attempt to bring revelation into harmony with reason is to be so characterized—if orthodoxy demands that reason is not to be employed in forming our religious opinions, but must submit itself without question to the letter of revelation, whatever difficulties and inconsistencies present themselves—I must confess myself a rationalist: and I would that those who enforce such

unreasoning faith would search into their own hearts, and ask themselves whether, whilst they lay such heavy burdens on men's shoulders, they do themselves touch them with one of their fingers. Mere unquestioning acquiescence is not faith—not faith that will profit a man : what we want is faith in a living God, in the spirit which giveth life, not in the letter which, if perverted, killeth, “which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction.” It appears to me impossible, but that men, who, like Sir Thomas Browne, ask for more difficulties, for more apparent impossibilities, that they may believe them, must make a merit of their faith ; they cannot make the spread of the truth a first object, nor be very anxious that there be no stumbling-block in the way of their weaker brethren. “Believing that we believe,” as Coleridge somewhere expresses it, is not a very profitable exercise. Neither is belief in certain dogmas or certain facts saving faith. All the instances of faith adduced by St. Paul are of those who thereby were enabled to do some great work ; and by faith—living, justifying faith—I understand that trust in God and His goodness which will enable us to do His will. “Without faith it is impossible to please Him ; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

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